

TOP STORY:

The nation's jobless recovery

March 22-April 4, 1993

IN THESE TIMES

the alternative newsmagazine

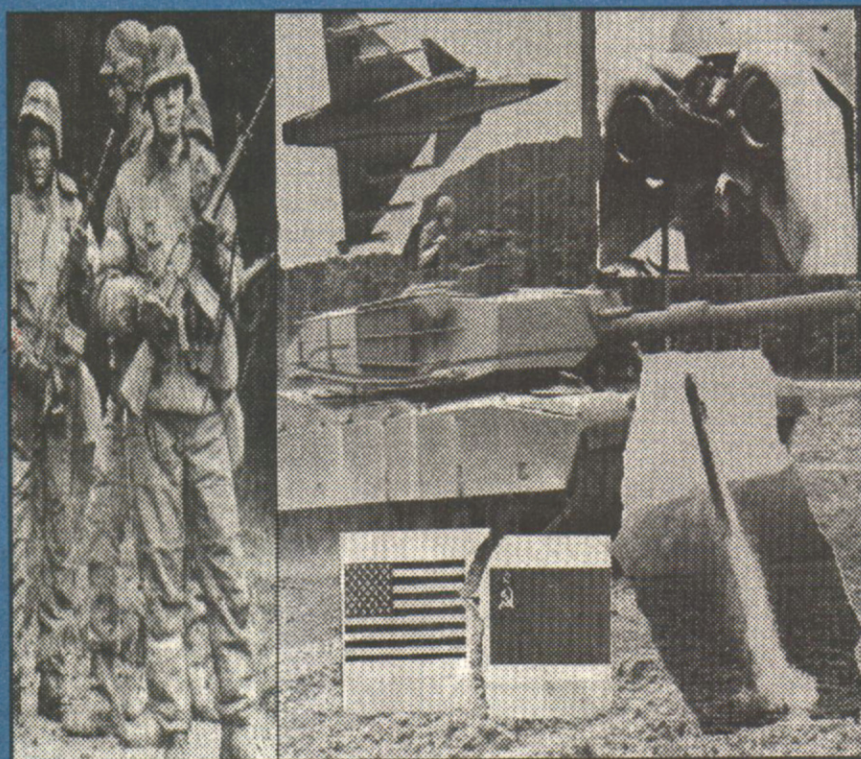
“The Yeltsin government’s message to women is ‘get back to the kitchen – and quick.’”

PAGE 22

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A NEW MILITARY



Re-envisioning defense in a post-Cold War world

by Ronald V. Dellums.

Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee

EDITORIAL

INDUSTRY LEADERS DRIVE HEALTH POLICY

The word inside the corridors of power in Washington is that Hillary Rodham Clinton's health care task force has never seriously considered anything but some form of managed competition. Appearances aside, it's a done deal, they say. And the corporate media are doing their part to create the impression that, except for Dr. Steffie Woolhandler and a small band of like-minded single-payer utopians, no one in Washington or the real world beyond is seriously advocating any other health care system.

The *New York Times* wants its readers to know that important people are nearly unanimous in their health care preferences. In a wonderfully revealing piece in its business section late last month, the *Times* reported on a meeting of "Hillary Clinton's Potent Brain Trust on Health Reform." Members of the trust met at the Jackson Hole hunting lodge of Dr. Paul Ellwood, a pioneer of HMOs. A four-column picture of this Jackson Hole Group—not to be confused with the Hole in the Wall Gang, an earlier Wyoming institution—showed 14, mostly gray-haired white men lounging informally together. The participants, dressed casually in frontier or Western attire, were said to have engaged in opening ceremonies and skits, as only social equals can do.

Three major insurance companies (Prudential, Aetna and Cigna) were represented. So was General Electric, Pepsico and the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, as well as the American Medical Association and the Voluntary Hospitals of America. Dr. Ellwood explained that he was only trying to bring all the players in the health care system together so they could hunt for solutions. "The basic problem with the health industry," he said, "is, here's this huge industry and there's no obvious leader."

Apparently Ellwood has had some success in remedying that situation. Leaders of his group briefed Hillary Rodham Clinton a few weeks ago, and the White House spokesman for the health care task force said that as "the intellectual brain trust" for the managed competition model, the Jackson Hole Group has "obviously played a very, very strong indirect role in what has evolved into the president's plan."

But insurers and health care facility owners and managers are not the only players in the field. Health care workers—physicians, nurses and support staff—as well as health care

users and would-be users are not only as important, but are also overwhelmingly more numerous. And these latter groups are the ones most in need of a new way of going about the business of providing health services in the United States. While those in the Jackson Hole Group have every reason to espouse managed competition, the rest of the nation has different interests and as consumers would benefit only marginally from such a plan.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, even the most effective managed competition plan would not save significant amounts of money within the foreseeable future. It would, however, create a two-tiered

health care system in which lower-income people receive limited care from doctors to whom they are assigned. The virtue of this system, as compared to a single-payer plan, is neither medical nor social. It would not assure quality health care nor would it be genuinely universal.

A single-payer plan similar to Canada's, on the other hand, would meet most of the health care needs of working and poor Americans. As the *Times* recently acknowledged, "Canadians are proud of a system that generally provides good medical care," and at a lower cost than in the United States. While the average cost of health care in Canada in 1991 was \$1,915 per person, Americans paid \$2,868, or \$953 more per person.

The Canadian system provides universal coverage for all legal residents, comprehensive coverage of all medically required services, reasonable access to insured services with no deductibles, copayments or billing beyond the government-reimbursed fee. There are minor problems with the Canadian system, including rising costs due to a national surplus of doctors. But the system is still far superior to any of the existing or proposed managed competition plans.

If the Jackson Hole Group had included more than the old-boy network of industry leaders, they might be recommending a Canadian-style plan to the White House.

ALLIES IN PEACE

In 1976, in our very first issue, *In These Times* ran an interview with Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA). We chose Dellums because we shared with him a politics based on what he called "the humanistic value that life is the most precious thing on earth—not bullets and bombs, or property and money, or prestige and status." Neither Dellums nor *In These Times* backed away from those values, no matter how unpopular they became during the Reagan-Bush years.

Now the political winds are again shifting. We were, of course, pleased when Dellums was elected chair of the House Armed Services Committee this year. And we are proud that he has decided to use this publication for his first major policy statement on the future of the U.S. military. ◀

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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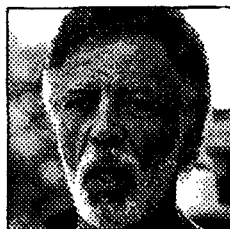
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LETTERS

American Jews and Mideast peace

Almost 400 Palestinians remain stranded in a frozen no-man's land in southern Lebanon. Though the United Nations Security Council demanded the immediate return of all the deportees, the Clinton administration brokered a deal in which Israel agreed to readmit 100 deportees now and allow the remainder to return during the course of the year. So for now, whether the peace talks will resume on schedule next month is still in doubt.

However the current crisis is resolved, progressive Americans—especially Jews—must face this reality: the so-called “peace process,” which began with much fanfare in Madrid a

year and a half ago, is a failure. This was predictable from the start, despite the apparent boost the process received from the victory of the center-left coalition of Labor and Meretz in Israel's election last year. The basic problem is Israel's adamant refusal even to discuss withdrawing from the Occupied Territories. The longer the occupation continues, the less likely a peaceful resolution becomes.

This simple truth emerged clearly from what I saw and heard on a trip to Israel and the territories last May. (It had been more than 20 years since I had last been in Israel, when I was a rabbinical student in Jerusalem.) As I traveled in the West Bank and Gaza, the tense reality of occupation was palpable. I could see how everyday life is conditioned by the understanding that

at any moment something could happen to shatter the veneer of normality. Heavily armed soldiers casually roam the streets, stopping and questioning anyone they wish, often flaunting their authority. People suffer constant indignities as a part of everyday life.

While walking through the Dheishe refugee camp near Bethlehem with two residents, a young soldier stationed on a rooftop gestured to us with his finger. My companions recognized this as a summons that could not be refused, and we walked over meekly to answer his questions. The Dheishe camp is surrounded by a fence with an entrance big enough for only one person at a time, a scene that conjured up in my mind images of the Warsaw ghetto. I was told how, recently, a soldier sat in front of the entrance slowly smoking a cigarette while a long line of residents waited with their bundles, afraid to ask him to move. The day I entered Gaza, residents were being stopped and asked for proof that they had paid their electric bills. When, as expected, they couldn't produce them, they were made to leave their cars and ID cards with the soldiers while they went home to retrieve their receipts.

Nearly every Palestinian I encountered had been detained by the Israeli military. Curfews are a constant threat that keep people from jobs, shopping and medical care and frequently subjects them to arbitrary acts of violence. Residents of Ramallah told me that during a two-week curfew in Decem-

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander





ber of '91, Israeli settlers rampaged through the area, under the eye of the Israeli military, burning cars and businesses.

The total number of Jewish settlers is now around 300,000. Land confiscation has reached close to 70 percent of the West Bank and over 50 percent of Gaza. Though Rabin campaigned on an anti-settlement platform, he has authorized the completion of at least 10,000 more housing units in the territories and continues to confiscate Palestinian land.

Violent repression also continues. I visited the office of the Palestine Human Rights Information Center in East Jerusalem, where the staff painstakingly documents incidents of shootings and torture. I received two reports: one presents evidence of systematic electric-shock torture in Israeli detention centers (charges that have been corroborated in the Israeli mainstream newspaper *Hadashot*). The second documents the increase in murders of Palestinian resisters by Israeli undercover units—"death squads."

Rabin has openly endorsed the use of undercover units, who are responsible for at least 13 of the 80 deaths in the last half of 1992. House demolitions and the uprooting of trees continue. Despite the rhetoric of peace and accommodation, Rabin remains steadfastly committed to the traditional three "no's" of mainstream Israeli political discourse: no to the PLO; no to withdrawal from the territories; and no to Palestinian self-determination.

Thus the recent mass expulsion is only the most dramatic element of a larger process of escalating repression. A joint Arab-Jewish committee against the deportations has set up a constant vigil outside Rabin's office, and a petition campaign has gathered thousands of signatures, including at least 10

members of the Knesset. But unless the Israeli government is forced to return all the deportees unconditionally—and at present, it doesn't look like it will—its "iron fist" policy will appear vindicated.

It is clear that for real progress toward peace, Israel must respect human rights in the territories, declare itself ready to negotiate withdrawal from the territories behind safe and secure borders and recognize Palestinian sovereignty in the West Bank and Gaza. It is just as clear that this fundamental shift in Israeli policy will not happen so long as the U.S. continues to provide Israel with diplomatic cover in the U.N., and with billions of dollars in military and economic aid each year. But the question of conditioning aid to Israel is still a touchy subject in many quarters.

For years progressives have treated the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with kid gloves, or avoided it altogether. But the American progressive community can no longer remain idle. The role of progressive American Jews is especially crucial. We have to declare that American aid for oppression must be opposed. We have to denounce the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinians, both in the territories and inside Israel itself. But most important, we must insist that we will not tolerate charges of anti-Semitism aimed at those whose sympathy for the countless Jewish victims of oppression through the ages is now joined with sympathy for the Palestinian victims of the Jewish state.

Joseph Levine
Raleigh, N.C.

False claims

Although John Judis noted the futility of the recent U.S. bombing campaign against Iraq (*ITT*, Feb. 8), he claimed that "Hussein" gave "ample provocation for military reprisal." Judis recognized that the U.S. set up the "no-fly zones" to provoke Iraq, but failed to point out that the U.S. rationale for bombing Iraq was totally fraudulent. Indeed, Judis failed to note

that the U.N. legal department concluded on January 22 that it saw no language in existing U.N. resolutions that would give the United States and its allies authority to enforce the no-fly zones. Judis also falsely claimed that "Iraqi armed forces violated U.N. resolutions by entering Kuwait to retrieve weapons."

In fact, on January 11, the Associated Press noted that "Gen. Timothy Dibuama of Ghana, commander of the U.N. force that monitors the demilitarized zone along the border, gave Iraqi workers from a private contracting company permission to go in and retrieve equipment." The land in question was former Iraqi territory which a recent U.N. order had given to Kuwait and the Iraqis were ordered to go in and take out equipment (CNN showed the letter on a newscast).

After the January 17 bombing of the Al-Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad, Russia called for a halt in the U.S. bombing and for U.N. Security Council discussions. Two days later the French foreign minister called for a halt to the bombing and questioned France's continuing role in the U.S.-led military action. Throughout the Arab world there have been complaints about the "double standard" under which alleged Iraqi violations of U.N. resolutions are punished with bombing, while Serbia, Israel and other countries recently condemned by U.N. resolutions continue to take proscribed actions without punishment. Thus, Judis joins the die-hards in the Pentagon, Bush administration and Kuwait who actually believed that there was "ample provocation" to justify another round of U.S. bombing. He is badly misinformed.

Douglas Kellner
Austin, Texas

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you wished to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

INSHORT



HIJACK HIJINX

*It's criminal if you're Haitian;
it's heroic if you're Cuban*

An alleged airplane hijacker's misadventures underscore the absurdities of Washington's inconsistent immigration policy toward Haiti. On February 18, Woody Marc Edouard—carrying a gun and claiming he was escaping his country's military rule—hijacked a DC-3 at an airstrip on Haiti's north coast. He forced the plane, along with its nine passengers and two crew members, to fly to Miami. There he was charged with air piracy, a crime that calls for a minimum of 20 years in prison.

But in a surprise move a few days later, a U.S. magistrate—at the behest of prosecutors—released Edouard on bail. The government's action astonished even Edouard's defense attorneys, who had not yet so much as argued for their client's release.

What was behind the move? Some Haitians and defense lawyers believe the government wanted to counter perceptions of a discrepancy between U.S. treatment of Cuban and Haitian refugees. The paradox: Cubans escaping in rafts, or even hijacking planes, receive a hero's welcome and substantial aid to resettle; Haitians are turned back.

In December, for example, a group of 44 Cubans commandeered a Cuban airliner to Miami. The government guard on board the plane was tackled, tied



By Woody Igou

Plastic envy

The FAO Schwarz catalog found on United flights now includes an ad for "Madison



Avenue Barbie," who comes complete with FAO bag, pearls, designer rain-

coat and teddy. The ad goes on to say that "Barbie looks like she's already done some pretty serious shopping on Madison!"

She's alone, too, since "Madison Avenue Ken" has been jailed for insider trading.

Gucci primitives

The *New York Times* reports that thousands of foreign domestics working in Kuwaiti have fled or taken refuge in foreign embassies because of physical or sexual abuse at the hands of their Kuwaiti employers. Most of them earn



approximately \$165 per month, compared to the minimum wage

for Kuwaitis of \$510 per month. Most of them must buy their passports back for \$1,500 before being able to leave the country.

Project Desert Spoiled.

Scooper poopers

Inside Edition recently tried to do a "sting" operation on a retiring congressman. They

offered him enormous sums of money to intercede in a mythical regulatory battle.



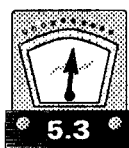
The congressman walked out, saying his intelligence was insulted. *USA*

Today conceded that it had faked an ominous looking photo on racial tension, which showed a gang member brandishing guns. In order to obtain the photograph, the reporter told the gang member, he was posing for an article on a successful guns-for-jobs program, and that he was turning in his guns.

The Fourth Estate is in foreclosure.

More than a coincidence?

In Waco, Texas, frustrated, unappreciated cult leader David Koresh, wounded by gunfire, babbled incoherently to CNN about his discredited, mythical theories that he felt



would save the world. In Washington, D.C., after Clinton's economic

speech, Republican House Leader Robert Michel, wounded by the positive reception of the president's speech, babbled incoherently about the virtues of a discredited theory that he feels would save the economy. *Alas, cracks in the House of Mirrors.*

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malicious cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. Et tu, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

and drugged, according to the *Miami Herald*. No one was arrested. The refugees were simply released, as are most Cubans. The U.S. Attorney's Office is still considering charges.

Compared to these Cubans, Edouard—who still faces trial—might be excused for considering his treatment unfair. Yet, unlike most Haitian refugees, he has at least been able to walk free on U.S. soil. Take, for example, the case of Ismanic Voltaire, a former member of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's political party who fled Haiti after soldiers came to arrest her at her home. She flew to Miami to seek political asylum. But according to the *Miami Herald*, she has spent 13 months at the Krome Detention Center, with little prospect of a prompt release. And she is relatively lucky. Ever since a May 1992 Bush executive order, Haitian refugees have been summarily repatriated without even the opportunity for asylum hearings.

Nonetheless, many Haitian boat people are political refugees, who would not leave Haiti in leaky boats if Aristide—their democratically elected president, ousted in a September 1991 military coup—was returned to office. By contrast, many—though not all—incoming Cubans are economic refugees seeking permanent residence in the land of opportunity.

The State Department declares that the governments of both islands are human rights violators and has imposed embargoes as punishment. But there are marked contrasts between the U.S. treatment of these neighboring Caribbean countries. The United States has been lax in applying sanctions to the military government in Haiti (see *In These Times*, February 22), while closing every loophole against Cuba.

The current Haitian government has been cited by human rights organizations for torture, assassination and illegal imprisonment of political opponents, especially priests, nuns and members of the media. The Washington Office on Latin America affirms that some 3,100 Haitians have been slain by the military in less than two years.

By contrast, Aristide had reduced human rights violations significantly, opened Haiti to full press freedom, established civilian rule in the countryside and begun the development of a free-market economy, according to Americas Watch. He had also cracked down on drug trafficking and begun the difficult task of building a civil society in a country where all remnants of democracy had been destroyed by U.S.-backed dictatorships.

The obvious solution to the Haitian refugee problem is to create conditions whereby they don't want to flee. President Clinton—who has reneged on campaign promises to overturn Bush's repatriation order—could help restore Aristide as president.

Aristide's return might be accomplished by nothing more than a phone call from the White House to coup leader Gen. Raoul Cedras, informing him that the military leaders' U.S. bank accounts will be frozen until the exiled Haitian president is restored and his security guaranteed. During Aristide's rule, Haitians did not sail to the United States but remained on their island, because, presumably, they felt safe and hopeful. Once the Haitian situation is dealt with, Clinton can look into dropping Washington's 34-year obsession with Cuba.

If Clinton doesn't act, one San Francisco attorney has suggested a logical—if improbable—solution for the bizarre situation. Cuba could confer citizenship on Haitians who want to come to the United States, just as Israel did for Soviet Jews who wanted to go there. Then, if the Coast Guard stops the boats, the Haitians could justly claim they were Cubans, enter the United States and receive a government stipend.

—Saul Landau

THE LAYOFF PAYOFF

*New study shows it's too easy
for companies to burn workers*

The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act is riddled with loopholes and weakly enforced, the survey by Congress' investigative arm shows. WARN never applied to layoffs of fewer than 50 workers. Nor did it affect firms with less than 100 workers—despite the fact that those companies employ 55 percent of the U.S. workforce. The GAO survey found that more than half of plant closings or layoffs were exempt because of loopholes (most often because the job loss had to affect at least one-third of the workforce to qualify). Yet more than half of firms that should have issued warnings didn't do so, and nearly one-third of those who did comply gave notice of less than the required 60 days.

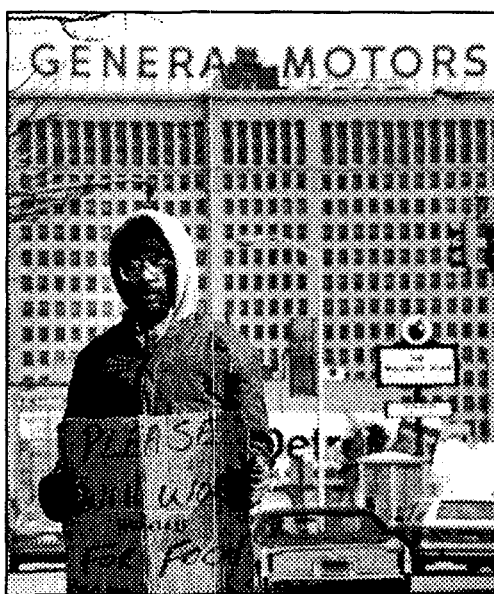
Despite its failings, the law has increased the number of firms who do give notice. The GAO survey also shows that the WARN has caused few problems for employers—61 percent said giving notice cost them less than \$500—but it has helped workers find jobs more easily. Nonetheless, most employers easily ignore or circumvent the law, in large part because workers find it is costly, difficult and often not very effective to file lawsuits over a firm's failure to give notice. Such suits are the only enforcement mechanism the law provides.

The Federation for Industrial Retention and Renewal, a national coalition of community groups fighting job loss, and the Sugar Law Center of the National Lawyers Guild, which has become the leading legal advocate of plant-closing victims, argue that the law must be significantly strengthened.

The two groups are calling for longer notice and lower thresholds for triggering notice. They want corporate payments for severance, health care and retraining. And they want to give workers and unions, when they are involved, more power to contest the company action. They also propose requiring disclosure of reasons for the job cuts and relevant company financial information, reforming labor law to permit bargaining over a closing or cut-back, and granting employees the first right to buy the business if it is put up for sale. Furthermore, the groups want stricter standards of responsibility for employers and Department of Labor assistance in enforcement.

On another front, attorney Staughton Lynd is soliciting friend of the court statements from community and labor groups hurt or threatened by closings. They will be filed in opposition to an appeal by General Motors over a court decision that the corporation could not close a Ypsilanti, Mich., auto plant.

The 1988 law requiring 60-day notice of plant closings and mass layoffs has failed miserably to protect most workers and must be strengthened, labor and community organizers argue, citing a new study by the General Accounting Office (GAO).



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MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

I'm So Relieved

Joe Camel, the phallic cancer-stick totem, is recognized by 58 percent of 6-to 11-year-olds. This news makes Joe's parent, R.J. Reynolds, gleeful. Why? Because earlier studies had shown even higher awareness among children, fueling critics' claims that the cigarette company was marketing to children. Furthermore, the new study shows that little kids often dislike the character. Camel argues that this "proves" that Joe isn't as effective at luring kids into smoking Camels as had been thought.

Selling viewers like you

Who's speaking here? "More and more corporations recognize PBM's unique, high-impact environment and take advantage of our research, tracking and servicing of accounts." Public Broadcast Marketing, that's who, a company that sells time on public TV and radio to corporations looking for hard-to-reach (upscale) audiences. Public broadcasting's scramble for funds is further blurring the already hazy line between commercial and underwriting credit.

Talk Back to the Box

Now you can tell somebody how irritating advertising is on public radio and television—as well as how important programs such as *All Things Considered*, *P.O.V.*, *Ghostwriter* and your local

news and public affairs programs are, and how viewers deserve a broader range of political opinion on talk shows than *Firing Line* and *The McLaughlin Group* provide. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, after congressional conservatives raised a stink about "liberal bias," has been required to assess the balance and fairness of its programming.

One measure has been to open a toll-free number, 1-800-356-2626, and a mailbox (P.O. Box 50880, Washington, D.C. 20091-0880)—a kind of "How'm I doin'" hotline. Public interest types are hoping that conservatives, who have already been rallied to write and call, aren't the only voices heard from.

Aw, Too Bad

The Checkout Channel is history. Ted Turner had figured he could recycle CNN programming in the supermarket checkout line and make millions in the place-based media hustle pioneered by Chris (Channel One) Whittle. Instead, Turner lost millions. Advertisers have cheaper ways, it turns out, to reach food shoppers. Besides, some clerks hated the noise and turned off the sound.

By the Way

If you're curious about what unions are doing with video and computer communications, subscribe (sliding scale) to UPPNET News, Labortech, P.O. Box 425584, San Francisco, CA 94142, e-mail code: labor.tech @ conf.lgc.apc.org.

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(See "In Short," March 8.) The judge ruled GM had led local government officials to believe that a series of tax breaks would cause the plant to stay in the area. A veteran of fighting plant closings in Youngstown, Ohio, Lynd can be reached at 1694 Timbers Court, Niles, Ohio 44446. —David Moberg

READY, AIM, BOYCOTT

GE opts out of the nuclear weapons industry

Do you have a favorite corporate villain? You may want to get in touch with the people at INFACT, the Boston-based group that has turned the consumer boycott into a fine political art. Since 1986, INFACT has spearheaded a world-

wide boycott of products manufactured by General Electric, the nation's No. 3 military contractor. Now INFACT is preparing to declare victory. In November, GE announced that it was getting rid of its aerospace division. This followed the company's 1990 decision to cease manufacturing triggers for hydrogen bombs.

INFACT was founded in 1977 to combat the Nestle Corp.'s contribution to Third World infant mortality through the unethical marketing of infant milk formula. Now the INFACT staff is scoping out the abuses of transnational corporations, in search of a company or industry to target. "We're two wins and no losses now, and we feel we are in a good position to take on these corporations and make a change," said Josh Feit, INFACT media organizer.

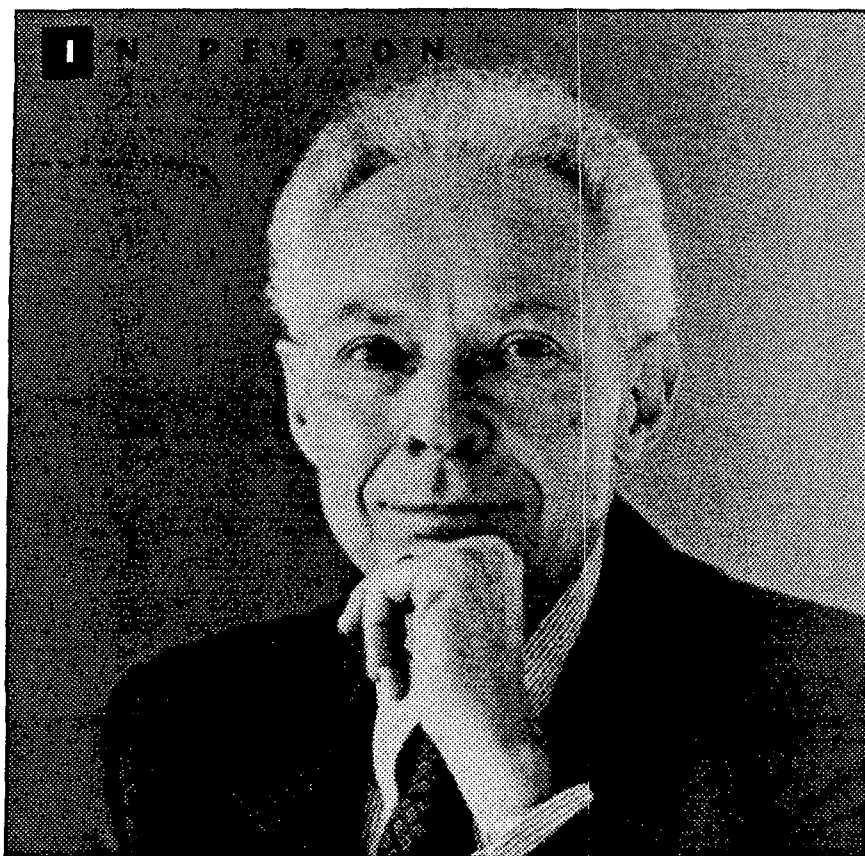
INFACT's problem is that there are so many irresponsible companies to choose from. They have, however, narrowed their search down to several abuses, including toxic dumping, aggressive marketing of tobacco, excessive profiteering on life-saving drugs and pesticide proliferation. The corporation that becomes the object of INFACT's ire must meet several prerequisites. The first is that the company would be an easy target of consumer pressure. And its villainy must have a political sex appeal. If you would like to participate in INFACT's decision, you may request a corporate abuse input survey from INFACT, 256 Hanover St., Third Floor, Boston, MA 02113. —Joel Bleifuss

ROUGH CUTS

BY JA REID

Gallows Humorists





Jeff Huebner

OXYMORONIC GENIUS

Warren Blumenfeld shows political promise

Saddam Hussein quietly raged. Peacekeeping missiles? Smart bombs? Are you clearly confused?

Friendly fire aside, veteran students of oxymorons had some serious fun during the Iraqi conflict, which is old news now. You know oxymorons: from the Greek for "pointedly foolish"—itself an oxymoron—they're figures of speech which combine contradictory or incongruous words or ideas. Modern history abounds with these significantly trivial linguistic anomalies. The elections gave us "billionaire populist" H. Ross Perot, and the Marines' mission in Somalia has been described as "humanitarianism by force."

"Once your awareness has been raised, they're impossible to dodge," says Warren Blumenfeld, "the Dean of Oxymorons," in Atlanta. "They're everywhere. They'll just pop out at you, even though they've been there all the time." The government, Blumenfeld believes, creates these words to obscure unpleasant news.

Blumenfeld, 58, says it's a mixed blessing that his full-time hobby as a serious word-player has overwhelmed his real career as a Georgia State University industrial psychology professor—a field fraught, he says, with "standard deviations" and "random orders." The self-described "gregarious recluse" and "scholar-humorist" (in the same vein as "student athlete") has literally written the book on the nearly ubiquitous oxymoron. Two books, actually: *Jumbo*

Thankfully, the U.S. didn't unleash any MX "Peacekeeper" missiles during the Persian Gulf War. We did, however, see a singular variety of "smart bombs" making surgical strikes while that anti-septic war with charismatic despot

ETC.

By Miles Harvey

Family values, R.I.P.

The Reagan and Bush presidencies meant "12 years of setbacks on international and domestic population and family planning programs," according to the *ZPG Reporter*, the publication of Zero Population Growth. The journal cites recent Census Bureau estimates that U.S. population will reach 383 million by the year 2050, a 50 percent increase over the current population of 255 million. Just five years ago, the Census Bureau had projected that U.S. population would be at only 300 million by the year 2050. The *ZPG Reporter* links these disturbing numbers to the Reagan-Bush era's anti-abortion and anti-birth-control policies. The publication notes that current federal funding for contraceptive research and development amounts to less than \$30 million a year. "One coffee break at the Pentagon equals an entire year's worth of research ... in contraceptives for American families," notes David Grimes of the University of Southern California Medical School.

Trickle-down economics, R.I.P.

More than one in 10 Americans are now receiving food stamps—the largest percentage to use the program since it began in 1964. The surge last year brought the food stamp rolls to 26.6 million people.

Kinder, gentler nation, R.I.P.

Hate crimes increased nationwide last year, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center's Klan-watch. The anti-racism monitoring group reports at least 31 killings and 322 acts of vandalism in crimes linked to racial religious or other kinds of bias. The violence made 1992 the "deadliest and most violent year" since the group began monitoring hate crimes in 1979.

Hole in the story

Ads for Lender's Bagels claim that the product has 20 percent more complex carbohydrates than many breakfast cereals. Well, not quite. Actually, the bagels have more complex carbohydrates only because they weigh twice as much as a serving of cereal, according to the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Furthermore, argues the consumer group, Lender's only gets away with making this claim because of a legal loophole. This loophole allows corporations to make assertions in food advertising that they could not make on the label of the product itself. For example, new federal labeling guidelines would prohibit the Lender's claim because there is no well-accepted definition for complex carbohydrates. But ads don't fall under these guidelines. According to *Corporate Crime Reporter*, the consumer group is asking the government to make its advertising and labeling guidelines consistent.

Shrimp & Other Almost Perfect Oxymorons and *Pretty Ugly*, his newer classic.

The latter book is replete with eight pages of oxymorons Blumenfeld gleaned from the Iran-contra hearings. It was, he wrote, "a veritable verbal cesspool of oxymorons. My semantic sinuses were semi-completely cleared by the use of the term 'limited immunity.'" Then there was the mini-firestorm, second and subsequent initiatives, regular random, one-sided dialogue, certain risk, public secrecy, vague recollection, extensive briefing, and so on.

The 1992 presidential elections—in which Bill Clinton's "non-traditional traditionalism" received a "43 percent majority" vote over George Bush's "activist conservatism"—spawned a slew of subtly obvious oxymorons as well. Populist billionaire and maverick Everyman Ross Perot (with the help of "paid volunteers" and "televised town meetings") managed to galvanize a sector of the electorate that came to be known as the "radical middle," a decidedly discontented voter bloc version of the "Reagan Democrats."

These days, Somalia also teems with unsung heroes—and semantic tripmines. Time and again, the media tell us how the country is "ruled by anarchy" (Anarchists Unite!). But, as a U.S. relief agency worker told the *Chicago Tribune*: "Within the anarchy, there were respected norms." Or, as exiled Somali writer Nuruddin Farah recently wrote in *In These Times*: "In Somalia, anarchy is the order of the day, anarchy with its own rationale." Could we call Somali warlords "established rebels" committing "religious violence" with a "looter's logic"?

"Don't forget 'lethal aid,'" says Blumenfeld, though he admits that that term actually goes back to the Iran-contra hearings, as do his oxymoron faves "pro-contra" and "whole hemisphere."

A frustrated English major, Blumenfeld, a native of East Chicago, Ind., studied psychology at Indiana University and got his master's and Ph.D. in industrial psychology from Purdue. He began teaching at Georgia State University in 1969, where he's a research professor of management and a professor of psychology.

Blumenfeld's affair with oxymorons began nearly two decades ago, when he came across the term "intense apathy." While taken by "ill health" in 1975—he was legally blind for a month as a result of an eye disease—he occupied his mind by thinking of oxymorons, so he wouldn't become a "human vegetable." He was hooked.

"I always enjoyed words and language," says Blumenfeld, whose wife Esther also writes humor books. "But once I got into the [oxymoron] loop, I couldn't get out. It started out as academic research, but then I was pretty much swamped by the humor component. Oxymorons get more press because they're fun."

Blumenfeld is rarely invited to give speeches on, say, "assessing the readability of documents"—one of his research specialties. In his unbiased opinion, oxymorons have made him an unknown celebrity—and a little big-headed one at that.

"I have to remind people—if I may be so arrogantly humble to say—that I spent 30 years gaining an international reputation as an industrial psychologist," says Blumenfeld, "and then I had oxymorons thrust on me. I couldn't get away from them."

Blumenfeld will continue to be a willing slave to the oxymoron's curse. Meaningful doublespeak and constructive ambiguity will always be with us. Even as the spiritual materialism of the '80s appears to be a recent anachronism and Arkansas chic settles into Washington, another civilized mob of Republicans waits to descend upon the White House in 1996. —Jeff Huebner

T H E F I R S T S T O N E

WANTED: A PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

By Joel Bleifuss

The U.S. is rotting, and the core of the decay is Capitol Hill, where the people who control our democratic institutions have sold their souls to the organized lobbies that bankroll their re-election campaigns. The Faustian bargain: members of Congress are assured the dollars they need to finance their re-election in exchange for abandoning the interests of their constituents.

Something has to be done. As Bill Clinton said in a January interview with *Newsweek*, "It's going to be difficult to pass the kind of health care reforms we need and the kinds of budgetary changes we need unless we can pass campaign-finance and lobby reform."

Clinton understates the problem. In 1990, political action committees (PACs) and individuals connected to the health industry gave lawmakers \$16.3 million. During this last election cycle, the PACs of the health industry hydra poured millions of dollars more into the coffers of our elected senators and representatives. Which insurance, pharmaceutical and hospital PACs "bought off" which congressmen will not be known for a good long while. The Federal Election Commission (FEC) is way behind in making the data available to the public. By the time it is available, health care "reform" legislation might be underway—with the public still none the wiser.

Congress could speed up this process by requiring that legislators turn over all records of PAC payments to the FEC in a computer-ready format. Currently, members of Congress turn in paper records that must be re-entered by

hand—a process that consumes months. The switch, of course, could easily be accomplished, since these paper records are nothing more than printouts from lawmakers' computer files. But then it is not in congressmembers' best interests for the public to know who their paymasters are.

You don't get something for nothing. Or, in the case of Congress, if you don't give something, you won't get nothing.

As Clinton campaign strategist James Carville succinctly explained to a *Nightline* audience, "You pay a lot more by having a PAC giving money to a candidate than you would if you gave it yourself individually." Carville supports public funding of electoral campaigns. "There ought to be a law that no political candidate can take anything of value from anyone outside of [his or her] immediate family," he said.

The naked truth is that contributions buy access to Congress. And in Washington access is power. For one thing, your calls are returned. If I had contributed payments of a few thousand dollars to

Speaker of the House Tom Foley (D-WA), maybe my recent phone calls to his office would have been returned. I had a few questions about the House of Representatives' campaign reform package currently wilting in the wings.

The House passed a similar bill last year, safe in the knowledge that George Bush would veto it. This year's bill is known as H.R. 3, the "3" meaning it was the third bill introduced to the House in the current session. H.R. 1, the family leave bill, and H.R. 2, the motor-voter registration bill, have already been passed. If Speaker Foley were truly reform-minded, gears would have begun to creak. So far, nothing.

A lobbyist working for campaign reform, who asked to go unnamed, complained, "Foley has scheduled no markup. There are no plans for hearings. There is no nothing. It is foot-dragging, and in Congress foot-dragging is a way of sabotaging."

Members of Congress want to look like they are responding to public concern about the special interests who now control them. Congressional Democrats, along with some Republicans, will come together to put some kind of reform package on the books. But will things change? Don't get your hopes up. H.R. 3, like S.R. 3, the Senate equivalent, is merely a mild palliative. The following is a likely scenario for reform:

- Congress will limit PAC contributions to \$2,500 per candidate—down from \$5,000.

- Limits for individual contributions will remain the same, at \$1,000. (Neither of these two proposals goes far

enough. Real reform would place a \$100 limit on contributions to politicians from individuals and PACs. If the rich feel a need to contribute more money, there are many worthwhile charities.)

- Spending limits on House and Senate races will be imposed and some form of limited public funding will be instituted. (The best way this could be done is through strict campaign spending limits, and dollar-for-dollar matching funds for all PAC and individual contributions—both of which would be limited to \$100.)

- Congress will regulate—and loophole—“soft money” contributions to candidates funnelled through donations to political parties. (Ideally, soft money contributions to candidates via political parties would be outlawed.)

- Television networks will agree to give special discounts to politicians who buy TV time, but will still be allowed to sell space on the public airwaves at a steady profit. (A real reform would require that all radio and television stations provide free air time to all political parties or candidates who meet certain requirements. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) could stipulate that this time would be provided free of charge in exchange for holding an FCC broadcast license.)

So what is the upshot of these so-called reforms? Some who have been working on the issue say the proposed legislation is a good start but it doesn't go far enough. Other campaign reform activists contend that the reforms don't go anywhere at all.

Three points to remember: First, one campaign perk Congress will not touch is the franking privilege that allows members to advertise themselves by mail to every constituent. For example, since 1985, Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), who has opposed the Democrats' tepid reform measures, has spent more than \$12 million of your tax dollars sending mass mailings to New York voters. Second, the Democrats will not abolish PACs. Organized labor, which gives all its money to Democrats, opposes controls on PACs. After all, stripped of their PACs, the leaders of the national unions might have to think about political organizing.

And third, in the absence of PAC money, individual contribution limits will become one big loophole. Larry Makinson of the Center for Responsive Politics in Washington is the author of *Open Secrets*, the 1,300-page *Congressional Quarterly* compendium of who paid how much to which congressman. He is not hopeful. “In the guise of great reform, Congress could make it

more difficult to track the money than ever before,” says Makinson. He explains: “If Congress lowered the contribution limits for PACs and didn't lower it for individuals, then you could have a situation where 20 corporate vice presidents and their wives all give \$1,000, where the husband puts businessman as his occupation and the wife puts homemaker.” According to Makinson, such reforms “will get the public off lawmakers' backs, but would still allow members of Congress to get their money.”

But as the old adage goes, “If you're going to prostitute yourself, why argue about the position?”

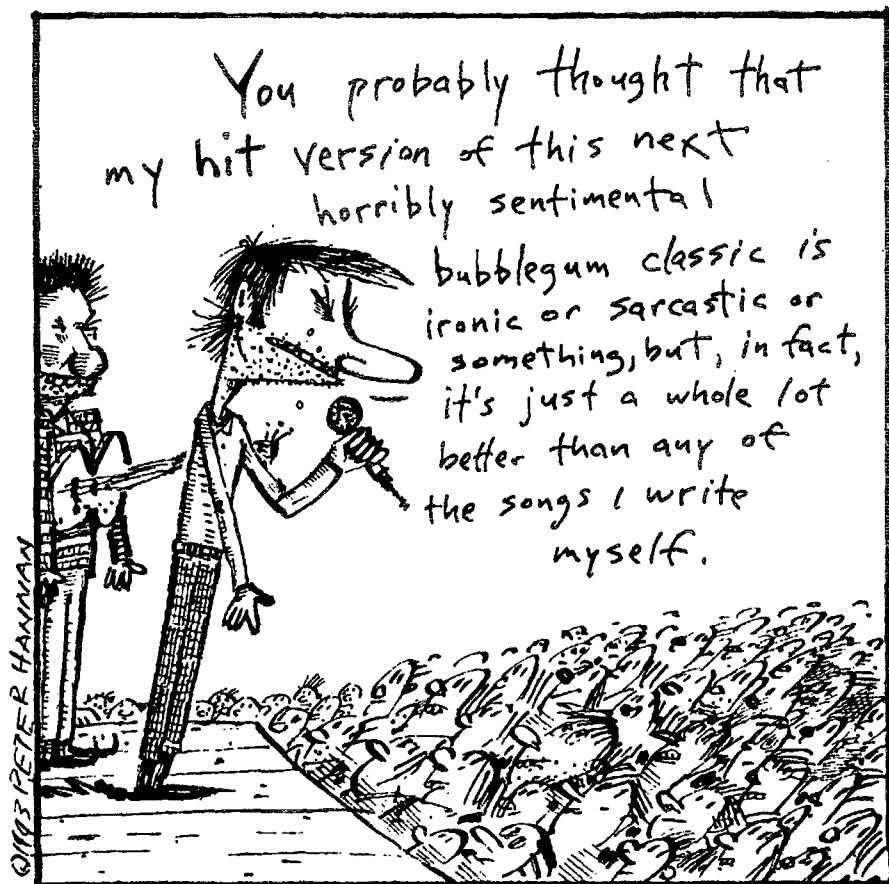
House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt recently said that nixing the proposed public funding of campaigns “doesn't threaten the heart and soul of reform.” Nor does it threaten the \$3.2 million (\$1.2 million of it from PACs) that Gephardt raked in during the last election cycle.

As Clinton rightly observed in his campaign manifesto *Putting People First*, “American politics is being held hostage by big money interests.” Clinton then promised to “support and sign strong campaign finance reform legislation.” Such actions, he said, are “part of our plan to fight the cynicism that is gripping the American people.”

After all, why be gripped by cynicism when you can argue about position? ◀

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



D E F E N S E

A new, improved world order

*In the wake of
the Cold War,
we have an
opportunity
to reorder
our national
priorities,
convert our
economy and
restructure
our armed
forces.*

By Rep. Ronald V.
Dellums

Since his election to Congress in 1970, Rep. Ronald V. Dellums has consistently questioned the role of the U.S. military both at home and abroad. In January, Dellums, a self-described pacifist, assumed the chairmanship of the House Armed Services Committee. In These Times asked him to outline his vision of a responsible military policy. Following is Dellums' first major statement on the subject.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has based its foreign and military policy on the theory that an international communist movement, dedicated to the destruction and domination of the United States and its allies, presented a relentless, expanding and implacable foe.

In pursuit of various strategies, military budgets were enacted that sought a

continuing advance in the capacity of the nuclear and thermonuclear devices that have characterized the atomic age. Our nation sought conventional and covert forces sufficient to challenge the perceived enemy in Europe and throughout the Third World—in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. But now, with the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact, the dismemberment of the former Soviet Union, a continuing détente with Russia and other elements of that former union, and an overwhelming battlefield victory in Operation Desert Storm, much of the intellectual and evidentiary basis that had been offered to support the Cold War strategy has melted away.

Many of us long argued, of course, that the threat during that period was overstated, that the strategy we pursued was poorly conceived or wrong, and that the scale of our military investment and our proclivity to use military force was inconsistent with our long-term diplomatic, economic and national interests. Whatever may or may not have

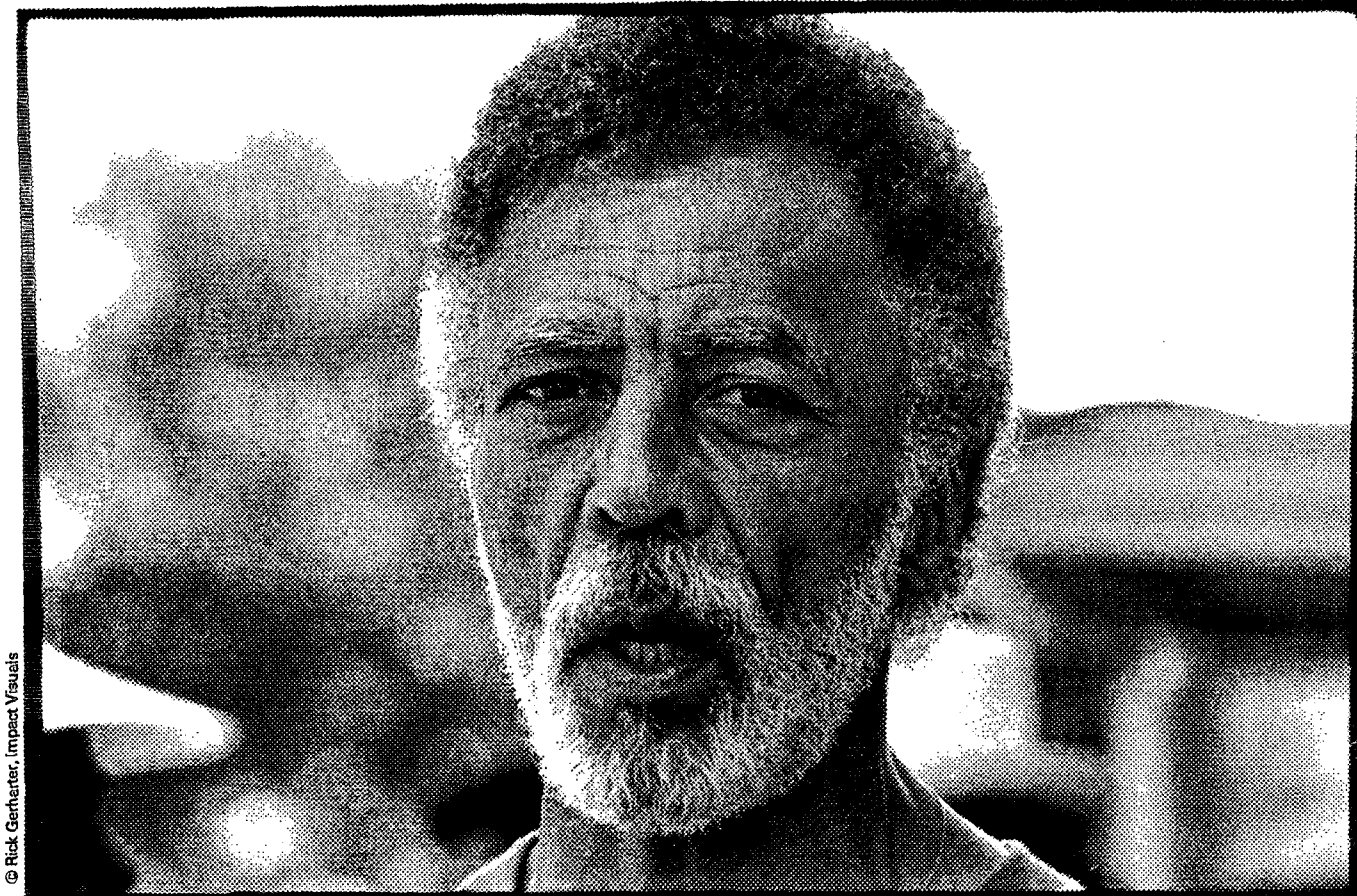
been true about Soviet intentions and the propriety of our military response, it must be conceded by everyone that those days have passed.

Hopefully, too, we are past the time when an uncritical anti-communism was expected of all, and that those such as myself who challenged the prevailing orthodoxy were dismissed as irrelevant or, worse yet, as menaces to the national well-being.

Many analysts now busily work to develop new menaces, new devils for a theology that would have us continue to squander our national treasure on useless military hardware and excess military personnel. Some cry out that our economy cannot afford to scale back military spending in this time of economic slowdown. Some insist that we must spend dramatically to meet any as yet unimagined threat that might loom at a later date to challenge U.S. vital interests.

For 20 years I have sat in the chambers of the House Armed Services Committee, challenging my congressional colleagues, a succession of presidents and the U.S. citizenry to view the world differently than through the





Rep. Ronald V. Dellums prism of bipolar, global confrontation. I have wept with frustration as we have launched military campaigns at times when diplomacy and negotiation seemed to promise a fruitful achievement of legitimate goals. I have been angered at our use of force in situations clearly unjustified then or in the light of history. I have been frustrated by the expenditure of tens of billions of dollars on weapons that were clearly destabilizing, redundant or unnecessary for any justifiable strategic mission.

In January, I was elected by my colleagues in the House Democratic Caucus to chair the Armed Services Committee—the very same committee whose former chairman fought to deny me a seat 20 years ago because he perceived me as a national security threat. I joined the committee in 1973 in order to become an expert in military strategy and the threat that we faced—not because I was intrinsically interested in the topic (in fact, I had come to Congress with the hope that my skills as a psychiatric social worker and as an expert in job training and development could have a dramatic impact on the domestic debate). But I grew tired of having colleagues dismiss my arguments to redirect our national resources to domestic priorities because I “naively failed to comprehend the nature of the Soviet threat.”

Twenty years of service on the committee, most recently as chair of the vital Research & Development Subcommittee, two years on the Intelligence Committee, membership in

the North Atlantic Assembly and its military committee have all brought me to this historic moment prepared to enter the debate at a new level, with new responsibilities.

What is that moment? The Cold War is over. Everybody agrees that military spending must be reduced, leaving only the questions: how much and at what pace? The new administration states its commitment to a more sensible military budget and recognizes the drain that military spending has placed on our economy. The much ballyhooed new world order trumpeted by former President Bush is a concept that is now up for grabs. Opportunities abound for a change in U.S. priorities and policy. I appreciate the chance to have a more significant impact on the current debate. And I am privileged to carry the vision of my community, and of progressives throughout our nation, into the contest to determine U.S. national security policy. In reshaping that policy, it is important that we understand what happened during the Cold War to know how we can change U.S. policy in its wake.

The Cold War involved a massive confrontation between the United States and its alliance structure, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and its allies, on the other. Depending on whose estimates one believes, upward of 70 percent of our national defense resources were dedicated to meeting the perceived threats posed by the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union. I believe that when most people discuss the post-Cold War era they refer to the lessening of that tension.

They appropriately argue that this new state of affairs provides the opportunity to reduce the degree of commitment that was dedicated to meeting those threats.

Much less discussed, however, is the confrontation that played itself out in various military conflicts throughout the so-called Third World. Afghanistan, Southeast Asia, Angola, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cuba and many other locales provided the literal battleground, often characterized as the surrogate wars, of this larger confrontation.

However, we must ask ourselves this compelling question: were these simply surrogate battles? Would they have occurred even without the construct of the Cold War as an ideological imperative? Or are they a manifestation of an over-reliance on military force as a solution to a variety of international issues? I arrived in Congress as a leader in the effort to end the Indochina War. I have remained steadfast during these two-plus decades in my vision that diplomacy should be preferred to war, that mutual respect among nations should be preferred to military intimidation, and that our military budget was bankrupting, has bankrupted and continues to bankrupt our economy.

I fear that a failure to confront our propensity to use military force will lead to a new world order that relies inappropriately on the use of U.S. military might to react to the world's many conflicts. We must develop instead a new world order in which the United Nations, regional organizations, constructive diplomacy and equitable development policies lead to a reduction of the economic, social, cultural and political tensions that foster these spasms of violence and human rights abuse.

The first question we must ask ourselves as a nation, and as a member of the community of nations, is: when is the use of force justified? The Armed Services Committee is just beginning that conversation. We will attempt to use our hearings to change the paradigm that suggests that the use of force or intervention should be a readily available and frequently invoked solution to multifaceted international developments.

We need to have the courage to achieve a world in which the use of military violence, covert or overt, is avoided at all costs. So long as any other options exist to resolve the crises at hand—whether it be the protection of internationally recognized human rights, the cessation of civil and cross-border wars or the restoration of civil authority to prevent massive loss of life—we should resist the urge to broaden the violence.

Both on a domestic and an international basis, we must insist upon adherence to required procedures to launch military operations, no matter how justified the military intervention may appear to its proponents.

In the international arena, the U.S. must resist its "isolationist" tendency. I do not mean this term in its usual sense, because, despite our international engagement, I believe we have been isolationist. We must recognize that the U.S. has often acted in isolation from the world community in the

use of force rather than in conformance with international consensus. Most recently, we saw examples of this in our refusal to place our troops under U.N. command in Somalia and our insistence on enforcing "no-fly zones" in Iraq that have not been established by the United Nations. If the new world order is to move us past nationalism, then even the proprietor of the world's most powerful military force must be prepared to conform to a perhaps laboriously created international consensus.

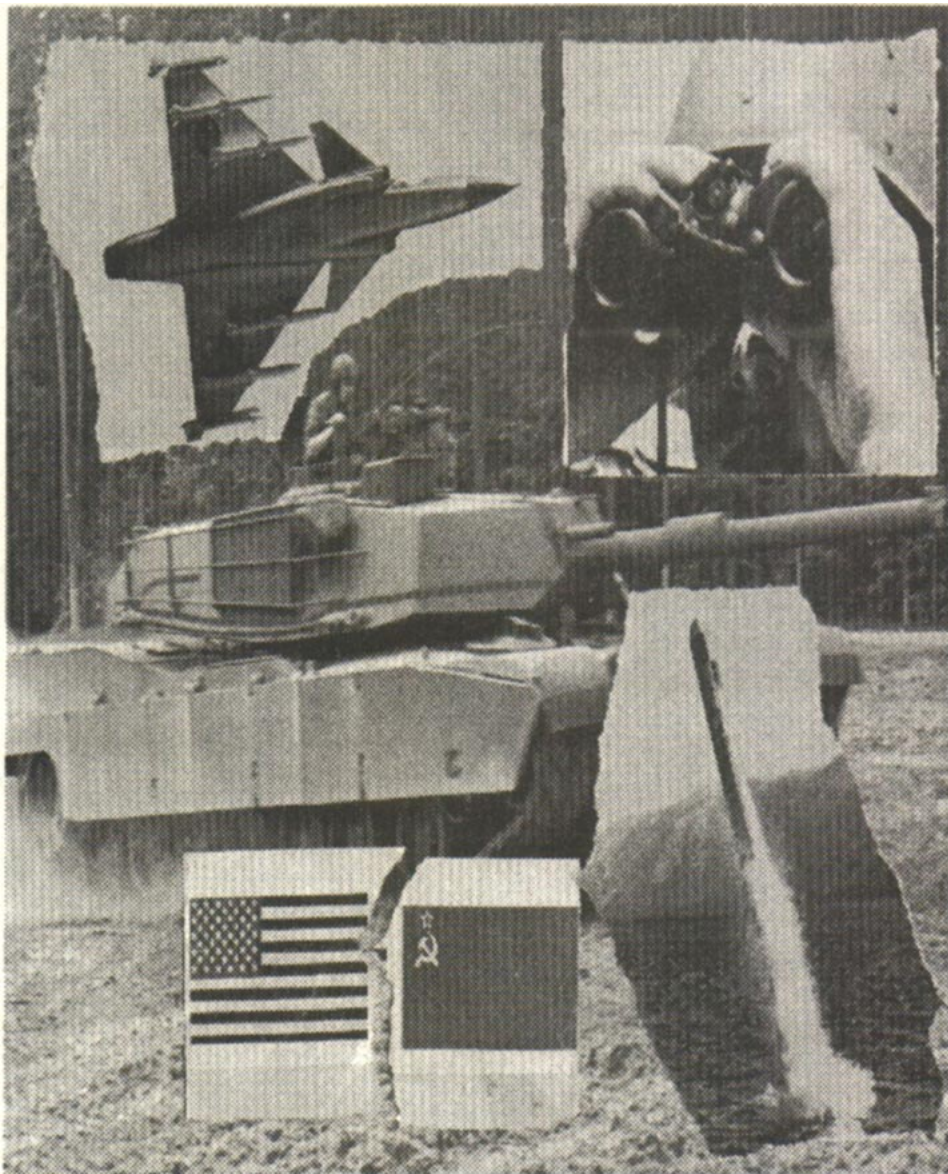
On the domestic front, we must insist that the Cold War pattern of presidents committing U.S. troops to military action without express and prior congressional approval must be stopped. Whatever justification *might* have existed under the claimed exigencies of the Cold War—i.e., that we were in a constant state of "war," which arguably required a president to respond immediately to any emergent threat—now no longer applies, if it ever did. President Bush's early insistence that he could undertake such combat in the Persian Gulf without congressional authorization was only the latest and most dramatic invocation of that claim.

Despite the recently held position of various presidents, the framers of our Constitution clearly intended that Congress determine when, where and in response to what provocations and threats our nation would resort to force, even short of full-scale war. Their rationale was clear and precise: the Congress will usually be less willing than the president to risk the lives of our citizens and the treasure of our nation in armed conflict. It is insufficient for a president to seek legislative approval after troops have been deployed or a covert action undertaken. Operation Desert Storm provides a stark example of the dramatic change of opinion that occurs once fighting begins.

Prior to the war, only 50 percent of Americans believed we should undertake immediate military action. In the actual vote in Congress (a vote sought, I believe, in no small part because of our success in defending the congressional war power in the case *Dellums vs. Bush*), the president could muster only 53 votes in the Senate; in the House, 180 members voted against the war resolution.

Within the first days of combat, however, polls showed Americans supported the action in overwhelming numbers and the House and Senate passed nearly unanimous resolutions approving the president's actions. Clearly, the opportunity for serious debate would have

***I believe
that tepid cuts
in military
spending will
produce the
worst of all
economic
worlds.***



would place us squarely on the path to a reasonable level of military spending without unduly disrupting our economy and the lives of the men and women currently in uniform or employed in defense-related industries. The budget the CBC submitted last year would have resulted in military savings of \$1 trillion from 1993 to 2000.

During the '70s and '80s, many progressives promoted economic conversion planning as essential in breaking the grip of the "iron triangle"—the Congress, the Pentagon and defense industry planning process—that prevented any effort at sustained military spending cuts. We must understand that this idea is now even more important for stabilizing today's economy. One need only look at the devastation in California, where more than 800,000 industrial workers have been laid off in the past several years, to understand the scale of what even a modest downsizing of the military will bring if not accompanied by vigorous economic conversion efforts.

In last year's CBC budget, we allocated approximately \$7.5 billion for what I characterize as structural economic conversion planning—the extended unemployment benefits, GI bill, community impact aid and worker training

passed had the troops gone into combat first.

If we reject military intervention as an instrument of foreign policy; if we believe that international organizations should assume the leading role in peacekeeping, human rights protection and the restoration of civil order; if we reject placing a plethora of truly civilian responsibilities in the hands of our military simply to maintain a near-current scale of military spending; and if, as former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara suggested recently in the *New York Times*, we pursue arms reduction programs that cut nuclear forces to levels that stave off the threat of nuclear blackmail, then we should be able to achieve the type of dramatic reductions that were proposed in last year's Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and House Progressive Caucus budget.

That plan envisioned reducing military spending by 50 percent from Cold War levels within four years, and maintaining that level of reduced spending for an additional four years. As the principal author of that plan, I believe that it

necessary to ameliorate the pain and dislocation of plant and base closures. In addition, we argued that the federal government had to take most, if not all, of the defense savings in the first four to five years and reinvest them in communities affected by military spending reductions. This is essential to pull the economy through the conversion process, to provide jobs for retrained workers and to provide economic activity that companies can compete for in order to retool for the next century.

Our military budget can be reduced substantially and permanently. My conversations with defense analysts within and outside the military establishment lead me to conclude that the United States does not now face a strategic threat that in any way approximates that of the Cold War era, and will not face any such significant threat within the next decade.

Our military budget must start from the point of view that it addresses real, defined, ascertainable and not hypothetical threats. It must be based on a proper assessment of

the strategy that will be employed to face those legitimate threats. It must be of a scale sufficient, and no more so, to deploy forces and procure matériel to implement that strategy.

I believe that tepid cuts in military spending will produce the worst of all economic worlds—reduced job opportunities in the current economy and no drive to pull the economy through to the other end. We must plan a bold change, as dramatic as the changed world circumstances that now provide us with this clear-cut opportunity.

We have an opportunity that we have not had since the end of World War II to reorder completely our national priorities, redefine our foreign policy paradigm, convert our economy and restructure our armed forces. Progressives have an opportunity to enter this debate and to convince our families, colleagues and neighbors that we need not fear and have much to gain by taking such a course.

This change will not come easily, but the opportunity will never be as great as it is today.

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The staff of *In These Times* has recently had some fun and reached thousands of potential readers by handing out sample copies of our newsmagazine to Chicago viewers of *Manufacturing Consent*, a documentary film on Noam Chomsky and the media.

In fact, *In These Times'* reception was so enthusiastic, we decided to continue handing out sample copies at playdates across the country.

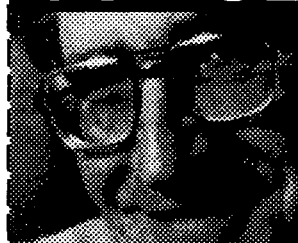
But, to effectively do so, we need many helping hands.

We're seeking volunteers in the cities scheduled (see ad on right) to accept delivery of bundles of *In These Times*, and then hand them out to viewers at the conclusion of the film. It won't take long — about 15 minutes. And believe me, people will be happy to receive them.

There will hopefully be a number of volunteers — especially for larger cities with multiple showings — so if you'd be willing to also coordinate volunteers in your area, that would be especially appreciated.

If you can help us out, bless you! Call 312/772-0100 and ask for Rob.

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CLIP AND SAVE

THE PENTAGON

The military humanitarian complex?

G

en. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wants to retool the Atlantic Command to create a permanent role in humanitarian relief and disaster assistance. But his proposal is sparking controversy not just at the Pentagon but among relief workers as well.

Should humanitarian interventions be added to the Pentagon's portfolio?

By April Oliver
WASHINGTON D.C.

In a recent report defining the Pentagon's "roles and missions" to the new secretary of defense, he calls for an additional mandate for the Atlantic Command to train forces for such operations. The Atlantic Command, based in Norfolk, Va., is a maritime command whose overriding responsibility in recent decades was to counter the Soviet threat.

Powell's report on roles and missions is a required exercise every three years, but this submission is gener-

ating inordinate turmoil in Washington, in part because it is the first report to address the realities of a post-Cold War world, and because the emphasis is on streamlining and eliminating redundancies. The reality of such cost-cutting is an all-out fight between services to preserve resources, jobs and—that precious commodity—turf.

But another reason for heartburn, especially at the Pentagon, is that this is the first time the report will be sent to Congress, where Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, and other congressional liberals are expected to push for more aggressive cost-cutting measures than Powell's report contains. (See story on page 14.) And while the new peacekeeping and disaster assistance role for the Atlantic Command is but a small clause in a massive document, some see it as an attempt to inflate the Pentagon budget, which now stands at \$280 billion. Says one critic, retired Adm. Eugene Carroll of the Center for Defense Information, "The military can't find an enemy to justify its arms, so it is finding friends to arm itself to help—at the point of a gun."

Some senior Pentagon officials are also unhappy with plans to create a new, clearly defined mission for peacekeeping, disaster assistance and humanitarian intervention. They worry that it distracts their soldiers from the military's first and overriding task—defending the country and its allies in the face of aggression. The relief community also is divided about a more permanent role for the military in the business of humanitarian assistance.

Is such a role for the military an appropriate one for American forces in the post-Cold War world? Somalia is a case study of how the military and relief agencies may fare in future joint missions.

In the days leading up to the invasion, the relief community in Somalia was deeply divided over whether military intervention would, in the long run, help or hinder their work. Concerns from field reps of many organizations ranged from the possible obstruction of a fragile political reconciliation process to the likelihood that relief workers on the ground would become prey in a hot war.

Nevertheless, many prominent relief agencies decided to act. Eleven agencies, through the auspices of an umbrella organization called InterAction, signed a letter calling for a stronger United Nations presence and mandate. Several of them—including Oxfam America, the International Rescue Committee and CARE—held a highly publicized press conference on November 24 in Washington to underscore the need for the international community to help protect their convoys. By so doing, they helped build public support for military intervention.

But when the size of the U.S. contingent was leaked later that week, several agencies, such as the American Friends Service Committee, dropped their support because of the perceived unilateral nature of the American military involvement. Most, however, continued to support the intervention, and even helped shape it. Brainstorming meetings were held at the State Department and USAID. One official present, *InterAction's* Tom Getman, describes a meeting between officials at the State Department, USAID and relief officials in early December as "historic ... I have never seen such cooperation between the government and the NGOs [non-governmental organizations] in my lifetime. They shaped the invasion at this meeting."

Getman claims that at this meeting the logistics, goals and speed of the invasion were decided. With input from relief officials, the military planners also gave great consideration to how to ensure the safety of the private voluntary organizations' staffs. Ultimately, no evacuation was mandated.

Regular meetings were conducted for the duration of the operation between senior government officials and relief agencies at the State Department. Relief officials were also invited to a meeting at Central Command in Florida to confer with senior commanders.

But one indication that this was not a perfect marriage came from a crucial, early miscommunication. Says Getman, "When the Pentagon promised a simultaneous landing in Mogadishu and Baidoa, we took them at their explicit word. We didn't understand that this meant as soon as it was possible logistically. We thought it meant within the hour."

Marines did not roll into Baidoa until eight days after the Mogadishu landing—eight frantic days for the relief officials who had decided to stay in Baidoa on the misinterpretation of "simultaneous landing." After that deadly miscue, the relief agencies were assigned a permanent interlocutor at Central Command in Florida to help avoid such misreads. Daily briefings were also held in Mogadishu among the military, relief agencies and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

The relief agencies, however, remained concerned about the military operation. They also feared that once the Pentagon operation was underway, their own funding from private donations would decline precipitously. This proved a false concern, as the military was quick to credit the relief agencies for their continued work.

Some relief officials continued to grumble, however: soldiers weren't moving fast enough to reach the hinterlands;

they weren't disarming quickly enough; and, in the end, they were pulling out too soon.

Overall, however, the burden-sharing between the two groups worked well in the short term. But even as the U.S. removes Marines, tanks and guns, claiming mission accomplished, critics agree that such a final verdict can be delivered only after the establishment of an effective U.N. force.

Was Somalia a unique experience? Given the limited, short-term success of the Somalia partnership, should humanitarian intervention be added to the Pentagon's portfolio?

Larry Minear of the Refugee Policy Group and Brown University is cautious about the allure of new administrative arrangements. "No doubt the military brings sizeable assets

to the international humanitarian effort. But since the primary purpose of military forces is to prevent or wage war, there is an incompatibility with the primary purpose of humanitarian action, which must be devoid of political agendas.... There has been a real basic philosophical reluctance on the part of some aid groups to accompany what is essentially a voluntary act with any element of coercion."

Carroll of the Center for Defense Information concurs: "A humanitarian command would interfere with relief groups' work. The military nature of any such operation

would overwhelm the humanitarian objectives. It can never produce enduring results. If the Pentagon organizes, equips and funds such missions, it will be a military operation first and foremost ... and military objectives will always win out in the decision-making." He claims that if "we identify, train and equip soldiers for humanitarian intervention, we will then run around and look for a place to use them." Carroll also contends that any permanent role for the U.S. military in humanitarian relief directly undercuts the U.N.'s authority and flexibility in the future.

But some experienced military hands defend Powell's proposal. Thomas McNaugher of the Brookings Institution (and a former U.S. Army official) claims that the military mission of humanitarian intervention is easily achieved. Moreover, he claims, "Soldiers love this kind of work. Feeding babies instead of killing people is emotionally rewarding."

McNaugher believes the real reason for unrest at the Pentagon over a more permanent mission in humanitarian relief is the nature potential conflicts. "When you get involved in humanitarian relief, you get involved in the Somalias of the world. And that means that military strategy will be deeply dependent on political strategy, something we have avoided



absolutely since Vietnam." McNaugher contends that Pentagon planners are deeply reluctant to be stuck in the political quicksand of a long-term commitment in an unwinnable war.

Retired Marine Lt. Gen. Bernard Trainor of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government is more optimistic. "I think the dangers of such a responsibility for the military are overly exaggerated. ... I don't see, unless this becomes a crusade, that there will be a major change in direction. It is really excess on the margin." Trainor points out that while such a humanitarian role may be new for the Army, the Navy and Marine Corps have long been involved in foreign relief operations.

Trainor also does not believe that U.S. soldiers in any way interfered with the relief task in Somalia. "I think our soldiers showed a great deal of street sense. They knew when to act tough and when not, without any special training." But Trainor also recommends that in the future "in no way should the U.S. military and relief agencies have any formal sort of structural or doctrinal connection."

Yet it was precisely the institutional collaboration between the relief community and the government that energized Operation Restore Hope in Somalia: the thrice-weekly meetings at the State Department, the daily intelligence-sharing in Mogadishu, trips to Centcom, the open avenues of communication, cooperation and respect.

At the regular meetings between the relief agencies and U.S. officials, now cut back from three to two per week, the

talk is already drifting to the possibilities of a new partnership—in Bosnia. Both sides acknowledge that in Bosnia it is much harder to delineate between humanitarian objectives and military-political ones. While there is much soul-searching about the moral implications of collaborating with the military there, many relief officials, including Getman, are calling for more assertive action. While the motive is to save thousands of lives, it is nonetheless incongruous to hear relief officials talk, without flinching, of the need to deploy Stinger missiles.

Some relief officials hope that the State Department's newly created office of Undersecretary for Global Affairs will formalize their access to the highest governmental levels. But to many that is still not enough.

Getman lobbies hard for other routes to help solve the Bosnian crisis and prevent future catastrophes. He claims that in addition to the State Department, "If we in the relief community had a humanitarian officer at the Pentagon and someone at the National Security Council to regularly engage in conversation, it would be a different era. Maybe we won't get a full-blown military command out of the Pentagon. Yet if these two agencies could only begin to see that security in this new era is not only or even primarily military security but means food security, refugee security and even environmental security, it would be progress."

April Oliver is a foreign-affairs reporter for the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*.

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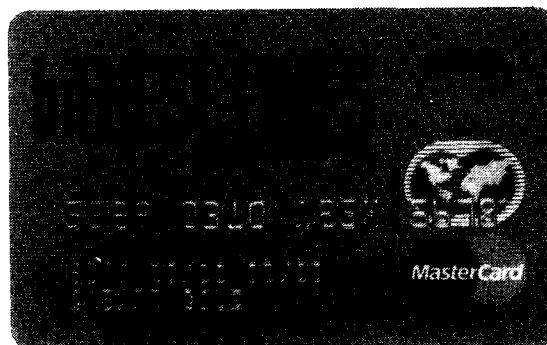
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R U S S I A

The kitchen counterrevolution

Seventy-five years after the Revolution decreed equality between the sexes, Russian women find themselves being ruthlessly prodded toward a giant leap backward.

Russian women are being urged, brainwashed and soon, very probably, legislated back to their premodern status as homemakers and mothers.

By Fred Weir
MOSCOW

Women, who until recently comprised 51 percent of the workforce—and 60 percent of all Soviet workers with higher education—are today being urged, brainwashed and soon, very probably, legislated back to their premodern status as homemakers and mothers.

The rationale is familiar. In a declining labor market, available jobs are needed by men. The state can no longer afford the massive outlays it once invested in a universal network of day-care centers, generous maternity leaves, child nutrition programs and other measures designed to support a population of working mothers. In any other country, cabinet ministers might wring their hands, decry the circum-

stances and propose palliatives. But this is Russia.

Asked recently about the alarming growth of joblessness among women, Russian Labor Minister Gennady Melikyan achieved the rare feat of shocking a room full of hard-boiled Western journalists into stunned silence. "Why should we employ women when men are unemployed?" he demanded. "It's better that men work and women take care of children and do the housework. I don't want women to be offended, but I seriously don't think women should work while men are doing nothing. Russia is the only country that has so many working women."

According to Melikyan, Russian women were regrettably "forced" to become workers during Soviet times as part of "an extensive strategy to develop the economy. We needed more people to fill new jobs. But for what do we need it now?"

Russia's tiny feminist movement has been warning of such a posture for years, ever since former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov publicly lamented the Soviet economy's failure to provide women "enough time to perform their everyday duties at home—housework, the upbringing of children and creation of a good family atmosphere," and argued that *perestroika* should "correct this shortcoming."

At least Gorbachov was talking about the right to choose, wages for housework, flextime and longer maternity leaves. The Yeltsin government's message to women is stark and brutal: get back to the kitchen—and quick.

"There is no event in modern history to compare with what is happening, except perhaps how North American women were forced to return to the home after running industry during World War II," says feminist scholar and author Elvira Novikova. "But that occurred in the context of an expanding economy, when it was at least conceivable that one male breadwinner could adequately support a family."

"Our economy is collapsing," she continues. "Poverty has engulfed the majority of our people, and it's impossible for most families to live even on two salaries. In this context, women are being commanded to sacrifice themselves, to give up all their rights, hopes and claims and willingly accept permanent serfdom as their lot."

Officially, unemployment in Russia remains comparatively low at around 1 million people, or barely 1 percent of the workforce. But that figure is deceptive: some 30 percent of Russian enterprises are technically bankrupt, and even the most conservative estimates predict 4 to 5 million unemployed by summer.

Of the currently registered jobless in Russia, over 70 percent are women. At Moscow's government-run employment bureau, eight out of every 10 applicants are female, the majority of them middle-aged and highly educated. The

trend in wages is even more dramatic. Two years ago, the average Soviet woman earned roughly 70 percent of what the average man made. Today, according to a recent speech by Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko, that figure is down to 40 percent and falling fast.

The Women's Union of Russia, successor to the old official Soviet Women's Committee, appears to be the only body concerning itself these days with retraining women for work in the new market economy. Without state support, and under threat of eviction from its government-owned premises, the union offers weekly courses in "survival skills" for unemployed women.

"What we are seeing is highly educated women—typically engineers, academic researchers and administrators—coming to us in desperate straits," says Vera Soboleva, the union's coordinator of international projects. "They have been laid off from their jobs by managers who tell them it is no longer 'rational' to keep them on. What we offer them are courses in areas where there is still demand for women workers: computer operators, hairdressing, child care and domestic services. Home labor, such as taking in laundry and sewing, is a good prospect.

"Of course, most of these women find this a big letdown," she confirms. "They are usually university-educated professionals who want to work in their own fields. We tell them we hope it's only a temporary problem."

For many women, work outside the home is becoming increasingly difficult in any case, thanks to the implosion of the once universal child-care network. "In our old system, 80 percent of the day-care facilities were owned and operated by enterprises. Only 20 percent of them were run by municipalities," notes Soboleva. "In the new atmosphere, with businesses being privatized and restructured for competition in the market economy, the first thing to go is child care.

"Even municipal facilities are being privatized and becoming too expensive for many families," she continues. "Despite a presidential decree ordering privatized day-care centers not to change their function, many are being con-

verted into commercial shops or office space."

According to the Women's Union, the majority of Russians immediately facing the ax of unemployment are women between the ages of 35 and 50. For younger women, a somewhat different set of hurdles has appeared.

"There is work in new commercial structures for secretaries, clerks and salespeople," says Novikova. "But women who want those jobs often encounter intense and open sexual harassment. Employers demand young and attractive women. Often they are urged to appear for the interview wearing sexy clothing."

Want ads frequently stipulate that "B-K girls only" need apply, a code for *Bez Kompleksov* (without inhibitions).

"The maximum age for a secretary on the market today is 25," adds Novikova. "An accountant must be under 45. For women over that, it's a catastrophe."

There are old, Soviet-era laws against this sort of thing, but none of them are observed in today's free-wheeling, exuberantly male-dominated marketplace. "Even the official Moscow employment bureau routinely lists placements with age and gender requirements," says Soboleva. "Sometimes they even accept something like 'blondes only' as a job qualification. We try to tell them: 'You can't do that.' But it's no use."

The Russian media, which is capable of being progressive on some other issues, has enthusiastically embraced the campaign to drive women back into traditional, subservient and dependent roles.

Novikova, who often works with Russia's only feminist think tank, the Institute of Gender Studies, cites her own recent survey of media attitudes toward women. "I find three predominant situations in which women are presented in what you could call a positive light," she says. "Overwhelmingly, the most common image is of women as sex object. The heroes of these stories are winners of beauty contests, brides of rich men, sometimes even prostitutes. The emphasis is on the rewards of this lifestyle: furs, jewelry, fine cars, foreign travel, etc. Second most common are articles about women who have made it in business. But these are not usually tales of hard work and initiative rewarded with



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success. Rather, they tend to be puff pieces about how she likes to dress, where she goes for her vacation, how her house is furnished, and so on. And third—don't ask me to explain this—there is an extraordinary number of stories about women who choose to become nuns. Dozens of new convents are opening around the country, and women of all ages and backgrounds are entering them. This is of enormous interest to our press.

"What is utterly lacking, however, are positive images of working women," she continues. "There are virtually no articles about how she is surviving in the new conditions, not even any of the self-help pieces that are typical in the Western press. In our media, we find only negative images of the working woman. She is presented as public enemy No. 1. When she left home to work, all our social problems began. Because of her, our children aren't properly educated, families break up, men drink, crime goes up, boys become homosexuals, the Russian nation is dying out, and every other sin you can imagine."

New legislation could soon add to the social and economic pressures driving Russian women back into the home. The government commission "On the Status of Women, Protection of Motherhood and Childhood" is drafting several new laws that, if passed in their present form, could complete women's descent into a dispensable, dependent, second-class existence. One of the commission's proposals, which has now been withdrawn for rewriting, would have forbidden mothers of children under the age of 14 to work more than 36 hours a week. Another would compel a "parent" with three children or more to remain at home, receiving a state subsidy equal to the minimum wage.

The most worrisome point is the lack of any clause guaranteeing equal rights for women in the draft of Russia's new constitution, says Soboleva. "The old provisions of equality between men and women in the Soviet constitution have been erased and not

replaced with anything. There is only one brief article that forbids discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, creed or sex. We are hopeful that this, at least, will be redressed."

It is hard to believe that Russia's well-educated, cultured and modern-minded female population would be driven back into the 19th century without a fight. Statistics from just three years ago showed that an astonishing 92 percent of all women in the former USSR either worked or studied full time.

If ruthless economic efficiency is the goal, it might make more sense to withdraw men from the workforce and leave the women in place. All available data indicate that Russian women are better qualified, more reliable (i.e., less given to absenteeism) and more productive workers than males. In stark contrast to their menfolk, Russian women tend to drink only in moderation.

But there is, as yet, very little organized opposition to the backlash. Feminist leaders note sadly that Russian women, as usual, appear to be bending their backs and accepting their fates. Although there are 70 registered women's organizations in Russia, most are professional associations or cultural groups. Only the Women's Union is a major political force and only the Institute for Gender Studies provides radical analysis and engages in pro-women political lobbying.

Still, there is defiance. At a conference organized by the Women's Union in late February, Deputy Prime Minister Shumeiko sat grim-faced while women from around the country assailed the Yeltsin government's record.

"We women have always been manipulated in the labor market," the union's chairwoman, Alevtina Fedulova, told him. "Now you want to force us to return quietly to the home. But you can't rewrite history. It's impossible for us to go back to the kitchen—especially our kitchens." ◀

Fred Weir is an *In These Times* correspondent in Moscow.

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THE ECONOMY

The jobless recovery

B

ill Clinton is right to insist that there's no real economic recovery until there's substantial growth in jobs. Yet new jobs remain scarce, and Clinton may find that his economic stimulus will not get unemployment down quickly.

Champions of austerity cite some favorable business signals as evidence that government should do nothing, lest it risk inciting inflation. Yet there are enough people looking for jobs and enough underutilized factories to indicate that even a bigger jolt than Clinton proposes would not fan the embers of inflation. Although a growth spurt last year raised hopes that good times were on the way, recent statistics suggest that, once again, the promised self-sustaining comeback may be just a sputtering dud.

By this point in an average recovery there would be

3 million more new jobs than have actually been generated. There would also be greater growth in income, which has risen at less than one-third the average rate for past recoveries. Instead, real living standards are still below pre-recession levels and record high numbers of people now get food stamps.

What is behind this jobless recovery? In part it simply results from comparatively slow growth in the production of goods and services. That slow growth, in turn, can largely be traced to the hangover from the '80s: bloated personal and corporate debt, bad loans, real estate overbuilding and rickety financial institutions all stymie expansion. Yet as Allen Sinai, president of the Boston Company, has argued, the country faces more than these business-cycle problems. They converge with a long-term weakness in growth that makes the recovery anemic. These compounded difficulties persuade Sinai and many liberal economists that stimulating economic growth should be the first order of government business, ahead of deficit reduction.

Making matters worse, the rest of the industrial world—including Japan and Germany—is sinking into a worrisome slump, depriving U.S. firms of markets for exports and giving foreign companies incentive to export here. Already, as a result of these trends, the U.S. trade deficit rose sharply last year. In most of those other advanced countries, as in the United States, the rate of productivity growth—the well-spring of living standards and economic competitiveness—has been diminishing in recent decades.

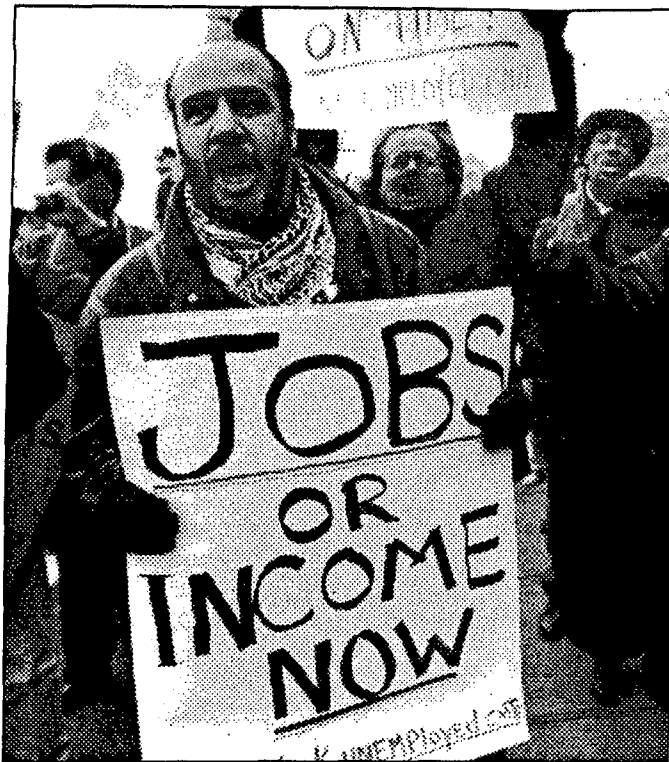
Some observers cite businesses slashing workforces and installing computers as evidence that the economy has been generating fewer jobs because productivity has risen so rapidly. But Northwestern University economist Robert Gordon, who notes that short blips of high productivity growth are common coming out of recessions, argues that U.S. productivity grew no more than 1.2 percent annually from 1987 to 1992, compared to 1.0 percent from 1972 to 1987. The Joint Economic Committee of Congress also reports that productivity has increased only slightly more than the average for past recessions. So far this is hardly a productivity boom.

But if any of the recent signs of new productive efficiency do hold up, Clinton will face a productivity paradox. More output with less work is good for society—depending on how productivity is achieved and how the new wealth is distributed in either money or time free from work. Yet the very productivity gains Clinton necessarily seeks to make the United States more competitive and thus avoid job loss to imports or capital flight will in themselves reduce the need for labor.

Manufacturing productivity gains in the '80s, along with

*If the economy
is working,
how come so
few people are?*

By David Moberg



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deindustrialization, reduced manufacturing from 22 percent to about 18 percent of both total employment and economic output, despite a boom in defense manufacturing. Manufacturing's job share is higher but also declining in the other advanced economies. Those manufacturing jobs will continue to vanish as productivity grows, unless a major technological revolution introduces new products—such as the automobile or electronics industries did—or vast new markets open up.

Other trends, including some Clinton will want to encourage, will also be eliminating jobs even as Clinton attempts to “grow” employment. The service-sector boom of the '80s already seems to be stalling as computers and new management strategies cut the demand for workers. For example, a disproportionately large fraction of the job losses during this past recession were permanent cuts in white-collar and middle-management workers. Health-service jobs continue to grow, but a new national health policy with effective cost controls would likely trim jobs, at least those in administration. Also, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which Clinton generally supports, may produce Ross Perot's colorfully described “giant sucking sound” of jobs heading south.

Without better policies to convert military industries to civilian production—and without a booming economy—it will also be hard to find work for displaced defense workers and military personnel. Perhaps even more critical, the defense industry has been the force behind what economist Ann Markusen calls the aerospace-communications-electronics complex. Without a substitute, the economy loses one of its major financial and technological motors of growth. Yet for both military and long-term economic rea-

sons, Clinton should cut the military even more than he now plans.

Headline-grabbing job cutbacks at corporate giants like Sears, IBM and GM don't reflect internal productivity growth as much as lost market share, but they're part of another worrisome trend. Far more than in past business cycles, workers in this recession have been permanently dismissed, not temporarily laid off, as businesses restructure and scale back future expectations. Many of the big corporate cutbacks—Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, Pratt & Whitney, United, Northwest, General Dynamics—reflect hard times and chaos in the airline business traceable in part to deregulation.

These big layoffs hurt: job cuts at General Motors match the entire employment of the biotechnology industry, one of the hot prospects for new high-wage jobs. Yet as economist David Hale of Kemper Financial Services argues, Fortune 500 companies shed about 3 million jobs in the '80s, while expansions of small and medium-sized companies and business start-ups created about 20 million more jobs. Battered, cautious banks have been reluctant to loan to these small businesses. Yet compared to countering job loss wrought by manufacturing productivity growth, expanding credit to small business will be easy.

Clinton seems aware both of the importance—politically and economically—of reducing unemployment and of the cyclical and long-range structural problems undermining job growth. The big question is whether the action he proposes is bold enough and represents the right balance.

In most recessions since World War II, the government has provided a stimulus through tax cuts and spending increases equal to roughly 1 percent of gross national product, which would be about \$60 billion today. The administration proposes only \$30 billion in spending and tax incentives over two years. And Clinton is taking with one hand what he's giving with the other. Whatever their merits, his deficit-reducing measures—tax increases and spending cuts—will create a “fiscal drag” on the economy starting later this year.

On the other hand, the decline in long-term interest rates brought on by the recent bond rally will provide a significant countervailing stimulus. If the Federal Reserve cooperates, Clinton could also push down interest rates further by shifting government borrowing from long to short term.

Yet everything must break just right for Clinton if his moderate package will be able to finesse the economy to recovery. “I don't think there's a credible argument that when you do deficit reduction that the Federal Reserve Board will lower interest rates enough so you won't have an adverse effect on overall growth,” argues Larry Mishel, research director for the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute. “Also, spending cuts and tax increases take effect quickly. Monetary stimulus can take 18 months.”

On the longer term problems, the Clinton administration has struck many of the right notes. It is taking a tougher, if still very mixed, approach to promoting national interests in

world trade. It has proposed initiatives on new technology. It has signaled an interest in defense conversion. It is shifting emphasis to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. It is encouraging investment in new equipment. And despite grave weaknesses in its emerging approach, it is promoting health care reform.

The Clintonites recognize—as economists Lawrence Summers (now in the Treasury Department) and Bradford DeLong have argued—that in order to generate long-term economic growth, governments have to make strategic choices to encourage public and private investments that provide large social returns. Such investments would have benefits that spill over to many businesses. Summers and DeLong argue that investment in machinery provides large social returns; others around Clinton stress education and infrastructure.

Yet in order to make these long-term gains in growth and productivity, Clinton will have to move beyond tentative tinkering at the edges of industrial strategy and commit the government to major missions that could yield a new technological lift-off, such as a comprehensive drive to produce non-polluting, efficient, renewable energy technologies of the future.

In addition, markets need to be expanded. That requires not a knee-jerk worship of free trade but a new level of tough-minded cooperation among the richer industrialized countries that puts economic growth of the poorer coun-

tries, including the former Soviet bloc, high on their global agenda. The overt goal must be raising living standards—and thus new markets—and not simply exploitation of low-wage labor to export to countries like the United States.

Finally, creating good jobs in the United States involves changes in labor market policies that encourage more stable, full-time employment. Companies in the United States are far quicker to lay off or dismiss workers in downturns than in most other industrial countries. Clinton could start by adopting some features of the German system, such as encouraging work-sharing during downturns supplemented by partial unemployment benefits and requiring more notice as well as severance payments for permanent job cuts.

Reducing work time is even more important. If costly benefits like health care were not tied to jobs—as would be the case with a national health system like Canada's—then employers would not be so inclined to assign overtime work in order to avoid hiring new people. Also, mandating paid vacations could reduce work time, which has grown steadily in the U.S., and trigger employment.

The overall direction of Clinton's program holds promise for long-term job growth, despite powerful tendencies at work in the economy that will eliminate jobs. It is likely that he will discover soon enough, however, that his strategy must be pursued more boldly and with more worker participation if he wants to make creating good jobs the ultimate test of his plans. ◀

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E NVIRONMENT

Green streak

President Clinton's new economic plan demonstrates that he's a friend of the Earth.

By Will Nixon

In his state of the union address, President Bill Clinton promised "the most ambitious environmental cleanup ... of our time." He then broke the political sound barrier by proposing a national energy tax.

Environmental groups didn't even wait to hear the actual words. Eight minutes into the speech, according to my fax machine, eight major groups issued a joint press release echoing the administration's rhetoric. "From energy efficiency to clean water to transportation, this proposal will create tens of thousands of jobs cleaning our rivers and streams, cleaning our polluted skies and reducing our reliance on fuels that contribute to global warming," sang the release.

Clinton had drafted his plan with an inner sanctum of advisers far removed from the Bush team that had an ideological bone to pick with environmental-

ism. Budget director Leon Panetta had earned a respectable "B" grade as the congressman from the Monterey coast of California in the recent book *Voting Green* by Jeremy Rifkin and Carol Grunewald Rifkin. The new deputy budget director, Alice Rivlin, served as the chair of the governing council of the Wilderness Society for four years. And Al Gore continues his holy crusade for the Earth, which seems far more passionate than his robodefense of the general Clinton plan. "You don't have to convince these people," says Ralph De Gennaro of Friends of the Earth. "They get it."

Environmentalists have long called for a carbon tax as a way to reduce the carbon monoxide that hangs over our heads in smog and the carbon dioxide that floats in the sky as a major greenhouse gas, but Clinton instead chose a BTU tax, which isn't so rough on coal compared to the other fossil fuels.

"We would have been out of our minds with a carbon tax, but everyone is pleasantly surprised that he decided on an energy tax at all," says Dawn Erlandson of Friends of the Earth. Roger Dower of the World Resources Institute goes further: "The energy tax is historic. Except for some small gasoline taxes, which are tiny when you take inflation into account, we have not focused on using price incentives to achieve our energy goals. We've been doing everything we can to avoid it. But prices are central to how people make their decisions in the world." Now that an energy tax is front and center, green groups say they will rally their members to support it.

But Clinton's BTU tax is a modest pollution tax at best. "By the time it's fully phased in, it will add 7.5 cents to a gallon of gas," says John DeCicco, a senior associate at the Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy. "An increase that small can only be expected to cut gas consumption by 1 percent." Ross Perot's 50 cent gas tax, on the other hand, would have cut consumption by 5 percent, about as much oil as George Bush once hoped to find in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

DeCicco says, however, that industries are more sensitive to subtle price shifts, so they may eventually reduce their consumption by 3 percent or better. Environmentalists aren't so much excited by the numbers, he adds, as by the fact that Clinton has established the principle of taxing pollution and included tax credits to offset the impact of this tax on families with incomes under \$30,000. And an energy tax, like so many taxes, will tend to grow once it's born. "The American Petroleum Institute is greatly overstating its impact because once this lever is hooked up, Congress and the president can yank on it a little harder," DeCicco says.

The Clinton plan also tackles the federal giveaways for logging, cattle grazing and mining, with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt almost gleefully leading the charge. Under the

1872 Mining Law, for example, companies and individuals can extract what they want from federal lands without paying a penny in royalties, making about \$4 billion a year scot-free. Clinton wants to charge a 12.5 percent royalty, raise grazing fees from their current level of one-fifth of the market rate and phase out below-cost timber sales that have cost taxpayers \$5.6 billion over the past decade. Friends of the Earth has joined forces with the conservative National Taxpayers Union to push for even deeper cuts in anti-green subsidies.

The time finally seems right to go after these outdated subsidies. "And the public and moderate-to-conservative members of Congress want even more cuts than have been proposed, and Clinton has signaled that he's willing to con-

sider them," says De Gennaro.

Clinton's budget ambitions, however, hardly measure up to the needs described in an "Earth Budget" prepared by De Gennaro and Gawain Kripke and released during the Clinton transition. The president wants to cut \$4.5 billion in subsidies over five years, while the "Earth Budget" identifies \$14 billion in boondoggles and giveaways that it argues should be dropped immediately. (Friends of the Earth doesn't include the grandest subsidy of all, \$17 billion in free parking that employers deduct for their car-happy commuters.) And Clinton's spending proposals of \$2.6 billion in immediate stimulus and \$12 billion in long-range investment don't approach the "Earth Budget's" recommendation to double the current \$34 billion price tag for green programs over the next four years.

Many agencies have run on lean rations for so long that they've fallen far behind their missions. Between 1979 and 1993 the EPA workload "doubled with the passage of nine major environmental laws and numerous minor ones," notes the report. But "the EPA's operating budget increased by only 4.7 percent after inflation."

De Gennaro won't comment on Clinton's spending package until he sees the details in the full budget in mid-April, but he does worry that the EPA won't get a raise. "I'm fearful the EPA will get sandwiched between an administration initiative to shrink government and a congressional desire to cut contractors and consultants. The EPA may lose staff and gain work."

But even though Clinton's budget numbers may pale beside those in the "Earth Budget," De Gennaro and others would rather judge the president by the fact that he has fundamentally changed the direction of the environmental debate. "He has definitely shown boldness in subsidy cuts and green taxes," De Gennaro says. "And on the spending side, we see some encouraging first steps that they are going in the right direction."

Much as Clinton has changed, so have environmentalists, abandoning the attack soundbites of the Reagan/Bush era for the careful rhetoric of firm coaxing. As Peter Berle, president of the National Audubon Society, puts it, "Environmental groups have always been good at telling government what to do, but the nuances and strategies of getting things done is not the same thing as advocacy."

◀ Will Nixon is an editor at *E* magazine.



D I A L O G U E

Ideological gulf

Opposition to intervention in Iraq must go beyond quibbling with "Bush's mistaken tactics."

By Sam Hussein

John B. Judis, in "Time bomb" (*In These Times*, February 8), complains that Bill Clinton's first week in the White House was "taken up" with bombing raids on Iraq and warns that U.S. involvement in the Gulf threatens to create "an endless distraction."

While he quibbles with "Bush's mistaken tactics," Judis seems to approve of continued sanctions, ignoring the mounting human toll. In 1991, the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that 40,000 Iraqi children died during the six months just after the Gulf War. Michael Viola, a physician at SUNY Stony Brook who has gone to Iraq several times with Medicine for Peace, adds that conditions have not improved in the last year and a half, estimating that death rates during 1992 are probably comparable. Though Americans have been told that

the embargo allows medicines in and that shortages are caused by the military diverting them, Viola says: "This is simply not true. We know there is not enough coming in."

In his article, Judis claims that "the Bush administration, eager to topple Hussein, always pressed the limits of the U.N.'s resolutions. After the economic sanctions failed to lead to a popular revolt, the administration rested its hopes on a military coup." But the U.S. never really wanted a popular revolt. At the end of the Gulf War, the U.S. encouraged democratic forces to rise up against the Baghdad regime and then abandoned them, a repeat of Henry Kissinger's 1975 ploy with the Iraqi Kurds. The Bush administration consistently refused to meet with Iraqi democrats, including the Kurds. As a State Department official explained to the *Wall Street Journal* during the Gulf crisis: "You can't expect democracy to produce toadies to the U.S."

Had the democratic forces won out, a liberated Kurdish enclave would have hurt the favored Turkish regime, which suppresses its

own Kurdish population. Also, a freeing of the Shi'ite south from the Baghdad regime would have strengthened Iran.

But to say that Bush "pressed the limits of the U.N.'s resolutions" is to engage in apologetics for the Bush White House. As the Center for Constitutional Rights notes, "None of the U.N. Security Council resolutions calls for the establishment of the current 'no-fly zones.' The no-fly zones were created by the so-called 'coalition' or 'allied' countries led by the U.S. No U.N. resolution restricts the movement of Iraqi military equipment within its borders."

Judis claims that "Hussein gave American, British and French forces ample provocation for military reprisal," citing Iraq's barring of U.N. inspectors. But that was not the reason given for the initial attacks by the Bush administration. Rather, it was the alleged Iraqi violations of the no-fly zones. As the attacks proceeded, the Bush administration cited new explanations for its attacks on Iraq, excuses that even the European allies objected to. According to these legal experts, Iraq's actual violations never constituted an "ample provocation for military reprisal."

Judis also claims that "Egypt and Russia have broken ranks with the U.S., Britain and France," but this too is misleading. While Paris continued to endorse the no-fly zones policy, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said that a U.S. cruise missile attack on an alleged nuclear factory facility in an Iraqi suburb "exceeded the Security Council resolutions." The European Parliament said the U.S. should take no further action without U.N. approval. Even British Prime Minister John Major phoned Bush to urge restraint.

As Clinton took office, increasing numbers of legal authorities were beginning to criticize the U.S. attacks on the



no-fly zones. On National Public Radio, Professor Alfred Rubin of Tufts University said the U.S. "substantially overreached the language" of the U.N. resolutions, noting the State Department's "slippery logic." But Clinton continued Bush's fiction, claiming that the imposition of those zones is "completely consistent with the U.N. Security Council resolutions."

To his credit, Judis does bring up the U.N. Charter, but only to claim that "it remains unclear when force is authorized." As noted above, it was abundantly clear to independent legal analysts that enforcing the no-fly zones was not U.N.-sanctioned and clear even to favored U.S. allies that the other U.S. attacks were illegitimate.

It is useful, however, to look closely at the U.N. Charter. Article 46 mandates that "plans for the application of armed force shall be made by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee." Instead, during the recent attacks, as well as the Gulf War, plans were made by the White House, and the U.N.'s Military Staff Committee remained the shell it has always been. This issue will be increasingly relevant as Boutros Boutros-Ghali and others call for some sort of U.N. military arm.

Mikhail Gorbachov called for proper application of such articles of the Charter at the start of the Gulf crisis, but the economically crumbling Soviet Union, along with the rest of the Security Council, soon caved in to U.S. pressure and passed Resolution 678, authorizing "all necessary means"

to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait, which the U.S. used to justify its attack on Iraq.

Theoretically, Iraq could bring the matter before the World Court, but, as the case of Nicaragua demonstrated, beating the U.S. in the World Court does not bode well for any regime.

Judis expresses sympathy for Washington by writing that "the strategy of targeting Hussein poses particular dangers for the U.S." But it is unclear if that is still the case. When asked by journalists why "we" don't "go after Saddam," Marlin Fitzwater explained without a hint of irony that "it has not been authorized by the U.N. resolutions that are, after all, the legal and driving force behind these actions."

But the new administration was not to be outdone. After the Security Council condemned Israel for its illegal expulsion of over 400 Palestinians, Secretary of State Warren Christopher arranged a deal with Israel where the U.S. would block any attempt to impose economic sanctions on Israel if it would take the Palestinians back within a year. Christopher claimed that this arrangement was "consistent with U.N. Resolution 799." But 799 calls for the immediate return of all the recently expelled Palestinians. Had an Arab diplomat uttered such nonsense, we would have been treated to descriptions of the irrationality inherent in Arabic culture. ◀

Sam Hussein is a regular contributor to FAIR's journal *Extra!*, and is co-editing a book of letters rejected by the *New York Times*.

I N T H E A R T S

Mr. Chomsky's Neighborhood

A new film helps viewers learn the ABCs of the famous cultural critic's theories on the media.

By Pat Dowell

You have to feel some sympathy for filmmakers who assemble a documentary about a man who spends most of his time analyzing how the media narrow the discourse of democracy.

If the filmmakers are smart and equipped with just a smidgen of self-consciousness, they can only fret over the prospect of reducing Noam Chomsky—linguist, philosopher and political activist—to mere soundbites.

Canadian documentarists Peter Wintonick and Mark Achbar are no dummies, and they have come up with several solutions to the problem in *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*. The film takes its title from Chomsky's 1988 book, written with frequent co-author Edward S. Herman, about the political economy of the mass media.

This unabashedly admiring film portrait, at 165 minutes with intermission,

gives Chomsky's ideas time to percolate, while the kaleidoscopic form of the film fits right in to our channel-surfing television habits.

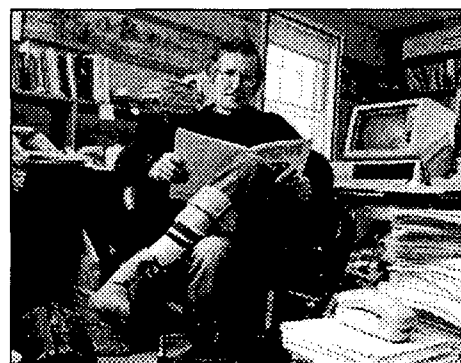
Wintonick and Achbar employ a very slick and less rigorous version of the poster-and-collage style that Jean-Luc Godard patented in his cinematic political essays of the '60s and '70s.

At the heart of *Manufacturing Consent*, however, is a compilation of interviews and archival footage, gathered over five years. It shows Chomsky at work, globally and locally, on the lecture and debate circuit, in his office at MIT and with his network of friends and helpers. These co-conspirators scour the world press for him and send clippings for his vast files, thereby sparing Chomsky the burden of wading through journals cover-to-cover himself. "[It's] so I don't have to read the movie reviews," Chomsky explains. (Say it ain't so, Noam!)

Wintonick and Achbar also put Chomsky in his place, as it were, by putting his talking head and his sentences on various electronic billboards and signposts, including "the world's largest permanent point-of-purchase video-wall installation" in a Canadian shopping center. Here is Chomsky bigger than life on the Jumbotron in Times Square, ignored by passersby. Here is Chomsky on the scoreboard of a hugely expensive and empty stadium (in what the filmmakers bill as "Sports Wrap with Noam Chomsky"), patiently explaining that sports is a way of instilling "irrational attitudes of submission to authority."

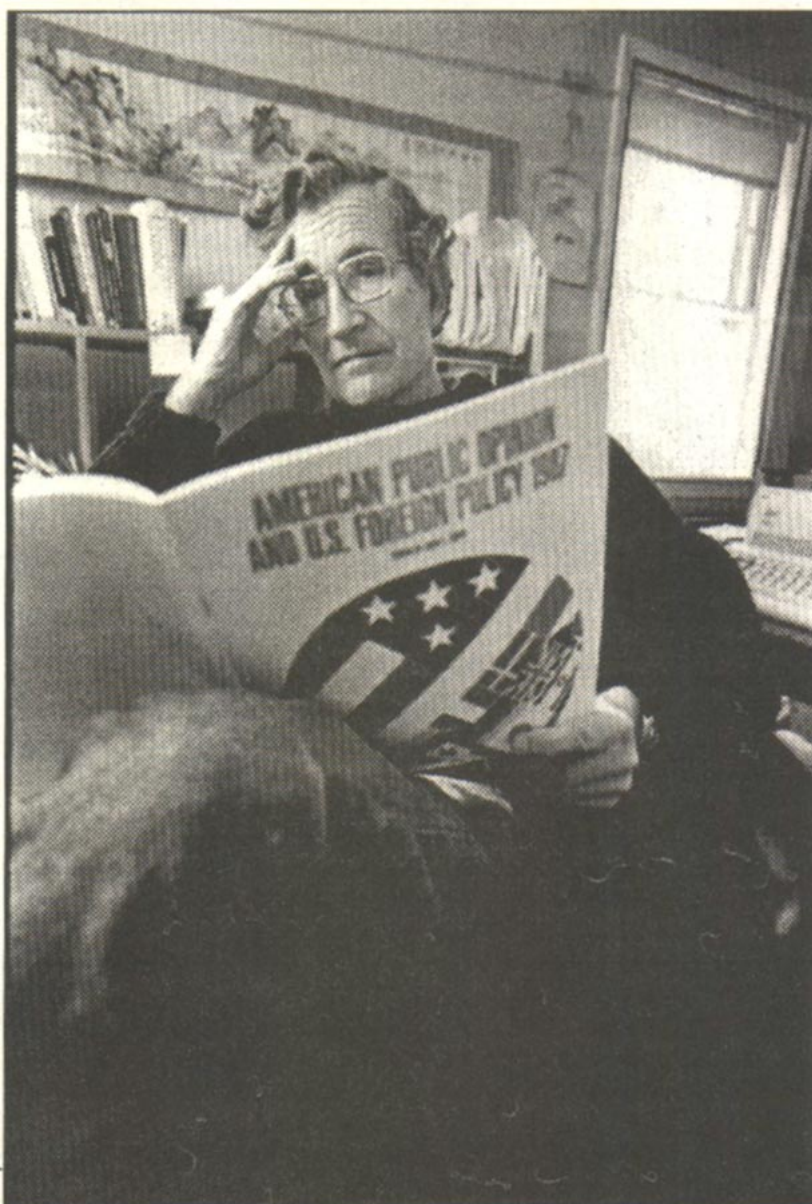
The effect is at once ironic and exhilarating, a fruitful juxtaposition that shows Chomsky's ideas writ large, while reminding us of another notion Chomsky would appreciate, that our society can digest dissent with very little discomfort. This depressing fact is most acutely illustrated when the filmmakers let a local TV news report of a heated Chomsky debate roll far enough to show that Chomsky's comments are nestled right next to the night's winning lottery numbers.

Wintonick and Achbar's



Jerry Berndt

**Manufacturing Consent:
Noam Chomsky
and the Media**
Directed by
Peter Wintonick
and Mark Achbar



Jerry Berndt

most playful stratagem for getting beyond the interview format is to stage vignettes that carry Chomsky's abstract observations into the realm of the concrete. The filmmakers suit up in scrubbies at one point to do mock surgery on a *New York Times* article, thereby showing how a *Times* rewrite distorted a London-based report on the genocide in East Timor. Chomsky's critique of the contrasting ways the mainstream media treated two genocides, one perpetrated by a friend of U.S. foreign policy, Indonesia, and the other by an enemy, the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, was the centerpiece of the book *Manufacturing Consent*. It's the major piece of meat in the film too, and makes its point.

The countless interviewers seen with Chomsky in the film are generally young and earnest folk, mostly from print and public radio outlets—rarely from television, unless it's overseas or public access. Chomsky's fabled 1969 encounter with William F. Buckley on *Firing Line* is included—Chomsky mutters about losing his temper, and Squire Willy mur-

murs in return about "smashing you in the god-damned face." There is precious little about the private Chomsky, but snippets of family history and of his revolutionary work in linguistics do surface.

The issue of Chomsky's "marginalization" is explored, though this would seem to be a red herring. Why would Chomsky or anyone who believes his "institutional analysis" of the major media expect him to be showcased?

Or even *want* him to be—since that would serve almost as a refutation of his assertion that television and newspapers collude in the indoctrination that is absolutely essential to democracy. As Chomsky points out, ours is a form of government that lacks the obvious bludgeon available to more dictatorial regimes. Chomsky slyly suggests the news media would be better propagandists if they allowed more dissent.

Nevertheless, Chomsky seems in the film to chafe a bit at his outsider status, which is confirmed by a spectacularly loutish burp of ignorance from ABC's Jeff Greenfield, who is in fact (and what a telling fact it is) one of the networks' savviest media critics.

When asked by an interviewer why Chomsky, "a leading intellectual," has not been featured more on *Nightline*, Greenfield shrewdly observes that he may be "one of those intellectuals who can't talk on television"—or, at least, whose ideas aren't concise enough to fit between commercials.

Greenfield's comment is a heaven-sent confirmation of Chomsky's assertion that "the beauty of concision" is that it only allows you "to repeat conventional thoughts." Greenfield goes on to opine shamelessly that "some of [Chomsky's] stuff looks like it's from Neptune." At

which point the filmmakers cut, rather too cutely, to Voyager II's photo transmissions from Neptune and two sci-fi rocketeers from the Eisenhower era.

Chomsky's propaganda model of the media seems to me essentially correct, but its very thoroughness is numbing. The totality of his theory makes *Manufacturing Consent* a tiring film, even though it is never boring.

Perhaps sensing this, Wintonick and Achbar try to close their film on a forward-looking note, with a survey of alternative media and some grass-roots suggestions for "activating dissent" and paddling out of the media swamp. This section of the film seems, unfortunately, a bit obligatory—hardly as engaging as prickly old Noam himself. But he has not been reduced to soundbites; in fact, *Manufacturing Consent* will give this celebrity of the left a wider audience. ◀

For information on upcoming screenings of *Manufacturing Consent*, see ad on page 18.

I N P R I N T

Beyond Bolsheviks and blintzes

By Marc Aronson

Judaism in America can be summed up in a single word: choice. You may marry in or out of the faith. You may employ any, many, some, few, or none of the rituals. You may incorporate aspects of any practice from Zen Buddhism to voodoo. Even if you choose to adopt the most restrictive forms of ultra-orthodoxy, you cannot forget that only a subway ride away is another life. Taking that ride may be emotionally difficult, but there are no legal penalties—and if you no longer accept the old group's morality, it won't necessarily be personally devastating, if you can find hospitality in a new community. And chances are you will, since new ones are always being formed. Judaism is not in decline—it's just wide, wide open.

This is the exhilarating, if threatening, message of Sara Bershtel and Allen Graubard's excellent new book, *Saving Remnants: Feeling Jewish in America*. Based on more than a decade of interviews with Americans about their Judaism, this sociological study yields case studies that read like good fiction.

For all of the authors' diligence, though, the interviews are not what is most important about the book. As they report what contemporary Jews feel about their faith, Bershtel and Graubard examine unsparingly and with real insight what each speaker has to say. Each case, then, is not merely a story but an instance. Taken together, they show that no single aspect of Jewish identity, no matter how familiar, is stable.

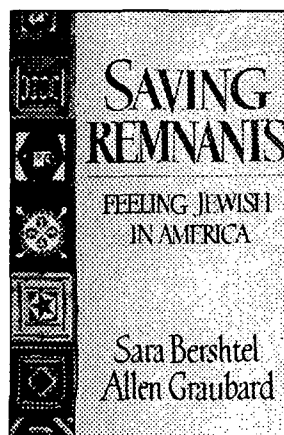
Not even the legacies of anti-Semitism, or the remembered horrors of the Holocaust, are enough to cement group identity. America in the '90s is not like Germany in the '30s. According to Bershtel and Graubard, the vision of themselves that contemporary American Jews "prefer is emphatically not that of an isolated Jewish community maintaining itself in a hostile world." Instead, it is of an ever more integrated world in which Judaism is an option, not a barrier.

In this colloidal identity soup, instances of anti-Semitism can still give Jews a temporary sense of meaning and community, but only so long as they feel threatened. Not a very secure ground for self-definition—hardly more solid, one might say, than memories of homemade latkes or wistful recollections of relatives with Yiddish accents. The Holocaust serves as an emotional charge for many Jews, but not as the basis for commitment to any organized community. And, in the age of the *intifada*, the question of Israel divides as much as it unifies.

But Jewish communities in various forms continue to proliferate, and the authors pay particular attention to those which seem to be flourishing today: the neo-orthodox, the New Age variations, those newly energized congregations that make the synagogue a fun place to be. Yet Bershtel and Graubard show that the very steps that these groups have to take in order to make themselves appealing subvert their claim to any kind of exclusive authority. If a synagogue is popular because it is like a social club, is it anything more than a social club?

The authors undermine in turn all of the familiar identifiers of American Jewry—experiences of anti-Semitism; attachment to Israel; an orientation toward social justice. One of the book's most daring and forthright sections shows that it was specific conditions in turn-of-the-century Europe, and later in '30s and '60s America, that temporarily made some Jews into social progressives. But Jews have never been exclusively leftist. Today, Jewish identity ranges anywhere from Friedmanite conservatism to an affinity for blintzes and bagels. (Troubles with one's mother, however famous and ferocious in the Jewish case, would be a rather slim base for any kind of exclusive identity.)

This dizzying prospect of limitless, existential, socially uninhibited choice is the inescapable condition of American Jewry. Here, at the moment of their greatest insight, is the one place where I find fault with *Saving Rem-*



Saving Remnants: Feeling Jewish in America

By Sara Bershtel and Allen Graubard

Free Press

333 pp., \$ 24.95



nants. While always ready to put seemingly inherent aspects of Judaism into their historical contexts, the authors still seem to believe that a true Judaism would be socially progressive, would have some socially defining quality, would establish a faith to which one had to make a commitment. It is that one inflection of nostalgia that I regret.

The Judaism of today reflects the conditions of today. If the old social progressivism was the product of specific conditions, shouldn't we expect a new Judaism under new conditions? If a leftist orientation was not inherent then, its relative absence today is not a flaw in Judaism but a response to a new environment. Judaism is not any worse off; it just operates differently in a different world.

How could it be otherwise? Jews are less community-minded because, in general, communities are less restrictive. Jews are less defined because self-definitions are more confused.

Jews in America are getting a free preview of the world's future. That does not seem like something to lament, even if it does mean that any sense of religious or communal identity is constantly up for grabs. American Jewish culture, I suspect, is increasingly defined by a personal, psychological state—a sense of self unattached to any permanent organization. But that's what modernity is all about. ◀

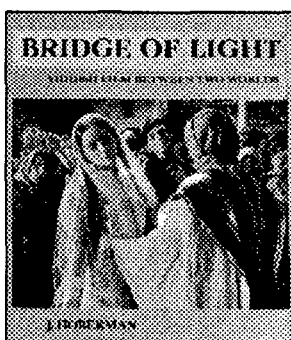
Marc Aronson, an editor at Henry Holt, is completing a doctorate in American cultural history at New York University.

Yidls on film

By Paul Buhle

This book may appear a nostalgic sojourn to an obscure corner of modern life, the kind of volume you find only in the Judaica and cinephile corners of a well-stocked bookstore. But *Bridge of Light* is more than this—it's an ethnography of commercial entertainment, a snapshot of a critical crossroads of radicalism and popular culture.

A quarter of a century ago, the attention of American Jews was said to be turning, in a variety of ways, back to the eight centuries of European Jewish history prior to the Holocaust. Then the 1967 war turned all eyes to Israel. The shrinking Yiddish-speaking world, the linguistic-cultural remnant of European Jewry, shrunk still more. Readers and writers of the once-abundant Yiddish press died, their historic newspapers folded, and virtually the only new speakers came from the ranks of the Hasids, at once religious zealots and extreme political conservatives.



Bridge of Light:
Yiddish Film
Between Two Worlds
By J. Hoberman
Museum of Modern
Art/Schocken Books
401 pp., \$40

It was the end of an era. Yiddish, the common tongue of the Pale, was for two generations also the international language of socialism, of a vibrant, radical popular culture—of newspapers, theaters and summer camps—that combined entertainment and edification. Go to Brighton Beach, Miami Beach, or Venice, Calif., and you can still find little circles of octogenarians steeped in equal doses of Sholem Aleichem and socialism. But they are only holding on. Between English, the language of assimilation, and Hebrew, the language of nationalism, the linguistic space has seemed all used up.

Then again, as I.B. Singer once reputedly quipped, the Yiddish language has been in trouble for a hundred years and will probably go on being in trouble for a hundred years more. At the moment, ironically, we're in the midst of a remarkable revival of public and scholarly interest in Yiddish language and culture. J. Hoberman, the redoubtable *Village Voice* film critic, has

with this book helped to put Yiddish culture on the late 20th-century map.

Yiddish film emerged out of the vibrant Yiddish theater of the early 20th century. It was produced, from 1911 to the opening of the Second World War, in America, Poland, Austria and the Soviet Union, reaching its apex of production during the later '30s. In America, its audience, never huge in number, was concentrated in those blue-collar urban neighborhoods where the nickelodeon had first introduced the idea of popular film. In eastern European cities and villages, the young craved the cinema with an enthusiasm, elders complained, that they had formerly reserved for religion.

The first generation of technically primitive, silent features drew mostly on the theatrical pieces of the didactic socialist maestro Jacob Gordin. His scripts revolved around the exploits of heartless, grasping parents who wanted to marry off their daughters to rich brutes—conflating the class and generational struggles as one. English-language newspapers considered such themes morbid and unpleasant, especially compared with the upbeat and fantasy-ridden commercial cinema. But Jewish audiences appreciated how deftly the films navigated the historical myths and the current dilemmas of a people moving with remarkable suddenness from folk to modern popular culture.

The textured Yiddishland of these films evoked images of a lost community. Spirited actresses like Molly Picon could take the edge off the melancholy, acting the part of Jewish jazz babies “with bobbed hair and bee-sting lips”; communist-minded directors could slap on a happy ending in the Soviet Union; modernists could add wild dream sequences and fantastic sets. Yet the greatest of the Yiddish films, like Joseph Green's *Yidl mitn Fidl* (Little Jew with his Fiddle) and Edgar Ulmer's *Grine Felder* (Green Fields), nearly always returned to memories of the *shtetl*, of the community on the verge of extinction.

The commercial success of *Tevye*, adapted from Sholem Aleichem's beloved short stories, gave Yiddish filmmakers (and even *Variety*) the impression of a boom. But it was the last chorus. Hitler destroyed the Polish-Jewish film industry, and the rush to language assimilation ended hopes in America. Israeli leaders, flatly ruling out Yiddish as a national language, made a revival impossible in that country as well.

The last American Yiddish features, like Jewish-American novels from Abraham Cahan's day to the present, were haunted by self-doubt—their conflicts reduced, as Hoberman puts it, “to a struggle between middle-class hypocrisy and cultural despair.” By this time, the language and the culture represented only the memory of a memory.

Hoberman has something interesting to say about almost every film he could lay his hands upon, and the particulars of his analysis defy any simplification. For me, these anecdotes of a forgotten culture stand as proof that in Hoberman's *veltlikhe Yiddishkayt* (secular Yiddishness) is the beauty of a culture with something for all of us. ◀

Paul Buhle, a frequent contributor to the progressive Jewish press, is finishing a collection of essays, *The Yiddishe Goy*.

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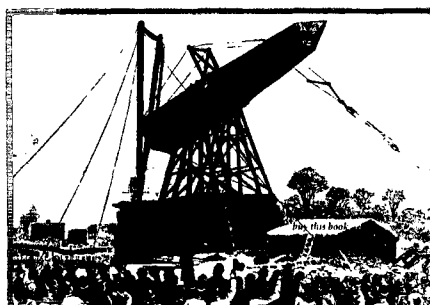
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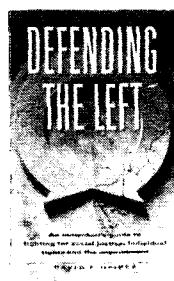
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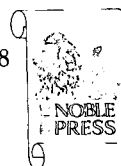
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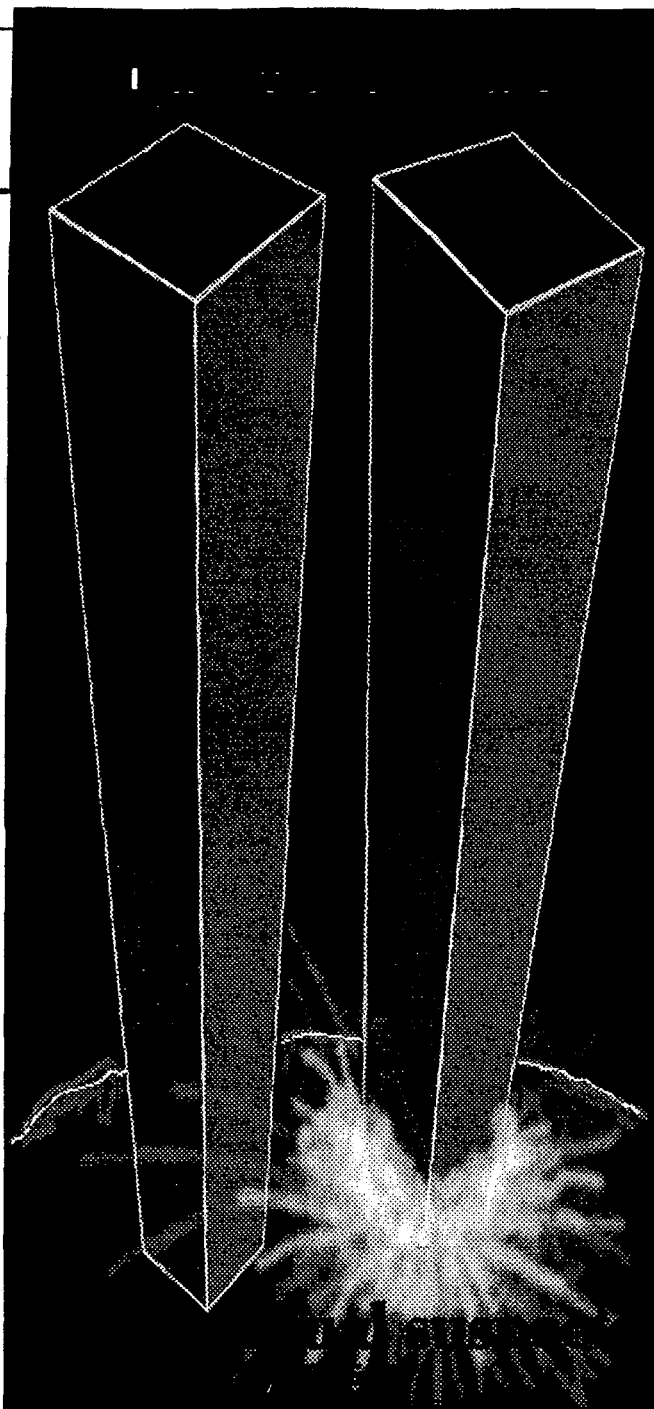
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Arnold Schwarzenegger... True quote from one of the first firemen to enter the crater: "It was like an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie. There were fires everywhere." A five-story balloon of Arnold holding three sticks of dynamite appeared in Times Square soon after the blast. But, sadly, *Terror in the Towers* will probably be a made-for-TV movie with an all-star cast playing an asthmatic, a pregnant yuppie, a green-card-toting grandmotherly cleaning maid, a Vietnam War vet holding back his war flashes and a skier in a leg cast, all heroically leading one another down the chimney-dark stairwells.

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Secret Service... Hey, it's their garage.

World Trade Center... Their buildings caught fire 30 times during construction in the early '70s. Maybe they just suffer from low self-esteem.

Will Nixon teaches Conspiracy Theory at U-Cal Santa Cruz. His books include *Russian to Judgment: Lee Harvey Oswald and the Murder of Czar Nicholas II* and *Nothing to Sneeze at: The Trilateral Commission's Links to the Common Cold*.